

DEVON CPRE

The Voice for Devon's Countryside

Devon Voice Newsletter - Summer 2023



Welcome to our Summer Newsletter

Although many of us, looking out of our windows may be wondering if it is indeed summer, we could hardly have a greater contrast with the long hot summer of 2022. The judges of the Devon's Best Churchyard competition are pleased that they were able to complete all the visits in the fine weather we enjoyed in June, they are now busy deliberating on the winner of what will be a very close competition this year. There is also plenty of time for any promising young landscape artists to get out and about, we are waiting excitedly for the entries for this year's competition (see details elsewhere in this newsletter).

Our campaigning work continues to focus on the proliferation of solar arrays covering up our farmland, and our campaign slogan remains Grass not Glass. Applications for more and more giant solar installations continue to be submitted all across the county, even in areas where the council planners admit that it is uncertain whether the local electricity infrastructure can actually cope with the extra energy which will be generated. The fact that many of the panels being installed are made in China using forced labour is beginning to be more widely recognised. Surely our net zero target can be met while still paying due regard to human rights?

In our last newsletter we drew attention to the fact that our water supply is not being upgraded to meet the extra demand put on it by the thousands of new homes being built. The rainfall we have been experiencing these last weeks should at least be helping to refill our reservoirs, but it may still not be enough to tide us through another period of drought. We will continue to campaign to ensure that the true impact

of new housebuilding on our communities and environment is taken fully into account, in spite of being accused of nimbyism. It is not nimbyism to raise legitimate concerns.

You may have seen that National CPRE has a new CEO, Roger Mortlock. Devon branch had a very positive meeting with Roger in June. His previous work with the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust has provided him with a sound understanding of rural issues and we look forward to working more closely with him and with national office in the near future.

We need your help! We are asking for our members who live near solar arrays to report back to us about how the land under the PV panels is being managed. We know that most people believe that farming continues unhindered under these panels (because that's what the developers say!), but in our opinion, people are being misled on this issue. Remember that farmland is also being used to grow biofuel crops and biomass for anaerobic digesters. We believe it is vital that any loss of productive agricultural land must be accurately assessed before we risk facing serious food shortages.

Finally, despite the awful weather we enjoyed being at the North Devon Show and once again had a very good day at the Chagford Show. We are also pleased to say that we will be holding our AGM as a proper face to face event this year, details later in this newsletter. We hope that we will see you there. As always, please contact us with any local issues where you think we can help.

Rebecca Bartleet, Chairman

Annual General Meeting

All members are invited to our Annual General Meeting which this year will be held in the Garden Room, at RHS Rosemoor, Great Torrington on Thursday 12th October at 2.30pm.

This will be our first in person AGM since the pandemic and we do hope you will be able to join us. We are also delighted to welcome our guest speaker this year, Sir Geoffrey Cox KC MP (Torrridge & West Devon). This will be a great opportunity to hear from Sir Geoffrey and to put your questions to him.

For catering purposes it would be helpful if you could let Penny know whether you will be able to join us. Please call 01392 966737 or email director@cpredevon.org.uk.

See page 5 for full details.

LOCAL EVENTS

If you are aware of any events in your area which you think we could take part in, please do let us know.

North Devon and Chagford Shows



Despite the wet and windy weather and an awful lot of mud, we enjoyed being at the North Devon Show along with the Chagford Show, which is always such an enjoyable day.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

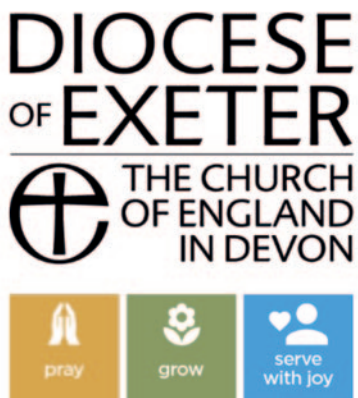
As a member, are you receiving our monthly eBulletin?

Our monthly eBulletins contain up to date news about our campaigns around the county. If you are not currently receiving these, please drop Penny an email with your email address to info@cpredevon.org.uk.

You can of course unsubscribe at any time.



Bishop of Exeter Called on Government to Address Rural and Coastal Housing Crisis



The Bishop of Exeter has used his final speech in the House of Lords to ask the Government what its plans are to address the housing crisis in rural and coastal communities.

The Rt. Rev'd Robert Atwell is due to retire in September after nine years as Bishop of Exeter and two years in the House of Lords.

He addressed Parliament's upper house during a debate.

The Diocese of Exeter covers the county of Devon and is one of the largest rural dioceses in England. With two coastlines, it also has a number of coastal communities.

In his speech, Bishop Robert accused the government of falling "woefully short" of its own affordable housing targets.

He listed second homes and Airbnb properties as among the reasons for the lack of housing for people on low incomes.

According to recent research by Middlemarch Team Devon, the amount

of rental properties listed as available in the county has fallen below 700.

According to Devon County Council, at the current rate, it will take 32 years to clear the backlog of people waiting for social housing.

Bishop Robert is calling for systemic change to address the problem.

He also says the Church has a "significant part to play," as highlighted in the Coming Home report by the Archbishop's Commission on Housing.

He said *"Without partnership and systemic change, the spiral of deprivation will become more acute. We need cross-departmental working and cross-party agreement to forge a coherent long-term strategy that will secure good housing and the flourishing of our rural and coastal communities."*

Coming Home Report:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/archbishops-commissions/housing-church-and-community/about-coming-home>



Rt. Rev'd Robert Atwell



This year's festival has over 60 events for all ages. A printed programme will be available from late August.

For the full list of events in date order, and how to book, visit Exmoor - Dark Skies Festival at: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk.

Events include:

- Guided Stargazing
- Planetarium Sessions at Tiverton and Dunster
- Astronomy Talks & Presentations
- Ranger guided Night Walks
- Nature and Nocturnal Wildlife Safaris
- Stargazing Suppers
- Well-being Sessions
- Stargazing Hotel Breaks



**Devon's
Best Churchyard
Competition**

2023

Who will be this year's winner?

With all the entries now visited, the results will be announced in September.

YOUR VOICE in DEVON VOICE

We hope you enjoy our Summer newsletter, which contains news, updates and information on issues and campaigns from around the county, as well as articles from a variety of contributors, for which we are very grateful.

We welcome articles, letters, comments and photos for our newsletters.

Please email Penny Mills:
info@cpredevon.org.uk



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE DEVON BRANCH OF THE CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND CIO

**Thursday 12th October 2023 at 2.30pm
at The Garden Room, RHS Rosemoor, Great Torrington, EX38 8PH**

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence.
 2. To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th October 2022.
 3. To receive and approve the Annual Report.
 4. To receive the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022.
 5. To appoint the Independent Examiner.
 6. Election of Officers (President and Vice President), Trustees/Executive Committee.
 7. Any other business.
 8. Guest Speaker: The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Cox KC MP (Torridge & West Devon).
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Minutes of the AGM held on 20th October 2022 via Zoom

The Chairman, Rebecca Bartleet, opened the meeting with a warm welcome to our many members who had joined us on line and explained a few 'housekeeping' rules regarding Zoom meetings. She was pleased to note that as many members had joined us virtually as had previously attended our AGMs in person.

Agenda Items

1. Apologies for Absence. There were 3 apologies for absence.
2. To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30th September 2021. There being no questions, approval of the minutes was proposed by Ivan Buxton and seconded by Phillip Bratby and unanimously approved.
3. To receive and approve the Annual Report. The report had been sent by post to all members and had also been posted on the website. There being no questions, approval was proposed by Dale Hall and seconded by Ivan Buxton and unanimously approved.
4. To receive the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2021. The Hon Treasurer, Mike Best, gave a short presentation on the accounts and asked for any questions. There being none, acceptance was proposed by Steve Crowther and seconded by Phillip Bratby and unanimously approved.

5. To appoint the Independent Examiner. The Hon Treasurer, Mike Best, proposed Ian Barrett FCA FCIE of Barretts, Newton Abbot as Independent Examiner. Seconded by Rebecca Bartleet and unanimously approved.

6. Election of Officers - President, Vice President, Trustees/Executive Committee. The Chairman explained that we would seek to find a new President. She proposed for the election of Vice President, Robin Hogg, and for the election of the Trustees to be elected 'en bloc' - Rebecca Bartleet, Ivan Buxton, Phillip Bratby, Steve Crowther, Dale Hall, Mike Best. Proposed by Warwick Knowles and seconded by Sarah Coffin and unanimously approved.

7. Any Other Business. Ed Parr Ferris from Devon Wildlife Trust gave a very interesting and detailed presentation regarding the Devon Nature Recovery Network Map. And he was able to answer several questions from members explaining the scope of the map.

The meeting closed with the Chairman thanking everybody who had managed to join us on line and was glad that the meeting had once again worked without any problems.

In accordance with the constitution, there was a brief online meeting of the Trustees in which Rebecca Bartleet was confirmed as Chairman.

**THE DEVON BRANCH OF THE CAMPAIGN TO
PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND CIO**

CPRE DEVON CIO - Charity registered number 1175228

Administrative address: PO Box 26, Beaworthy, EX21 5XN

**REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended December 31, 2022.

Administrative information

The Trustees who served the Charity during the year were:

Rebecca Bartleet	Chairman
Michael Best	Honorary Treasurer
Phillip Bratby	
Ivan Buxton	
Stephen Crowther	
Dale Hall	

Penny Mills undertook the day to day management of the Charity, as delegated by the Trustees.

The independent examiner of the accounts of the Charity is Mr Ian Barrett FCA FCIE of Barretts, 22, Union Street, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 2JS.

The Charity's main bankers were the TSB.

The Charity has a web site www.cpredevon.org.uk which contains considerable information about its activities.

CPRE Devon CIO - Structure, Governance and Management

The board of Trustees of CPRE Devon CIO is drawn from interested individuals who are able to contribute their knowledge and expertise to carrying out the various activities of the Charity. New Trustees are appointed by the existing Trustees.

The Charity is managed by an Executive Committee which comprises the following officers; Chairman, Honorary Treasurer and Branch Director. The Trustees sit on the Executive Committee as well as the officers.

Objects and Activities

The objects of the Charity are "to promote and encourage for the benefit of the nation the improvement, protection and preservation of the countryside of Devon and its towns and villages and the better development of the rural environment".

The Charity fulfils its obligation to enjoy charitable status by delivering the following benefits to the various communities in Devon:

- By considering applications presented to the local planning authorities to ensure that the benefits are enjoyed by the wider community.
- By holding meetings at both District and Branch levels that are open to members, local government councillors or similar, and representatives of other relevant interest groups throughout the County.
- By being available to members as a source of advice on how to respond to proposed developments that might affect them.
- By providing the Charity's website www.cpredevon.org.uk which has become a key enabler for the membership, the media and other visitors to the site to understand some of the key problem areas in Devon.
- The CPRE Devon website has thus become a repository of the work undertaken by the Charity where members can discover what may interest them and the wider implications for Devon as a whole.
- Funds bequeathed to the Charity are being used in accordance with the terms of the bequests; in 2013 for the further education of children of all ages in Devon on countryside matters of all types, and in 2017 for other projects exclusively in the county of Devon.

Financial Review

The Charity receives income from the National Office of CPRE (NCPRE) of approximately 50% of the subscriptions it receives from members resident in Devon. The Charity also receives grants, bequests, donations and gifts from supporters in Devon. In 2022 the Charity's income includes the following:

• NCPRE	£27,625
• Balance of the Mason bequest from NCPRE	£ 4,872
• Donations from supporters in Devon	£48,927

At the beginning of the year we set up a crowd funding campaign to fund legal action to prevent Devon farmland being covered in industrial-scale solar arrays. Although this particular appeal failed in The High Court we continue our campaign of 'Grass not Glass'.

Reserves Policy

It is the policy of the Trustees to maintain unrestricted funds, which are free reserves, at a level sufficient to provide services and equipment in compliance with its objects for a period of at least 12 months. Restricted funds are set aside of such amounts as are appropriate to provide specialised services and equipment in accordance with the restrictions attached to the funds by the respective donors. It was agreed by the Trustees that the Mason bequest be treated as unrestricted funds.

The Trustees confirm, in accordance with the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012, that at the year end the CIO did not have any outstanding guarantees to third parties nor any debts secured on assets of the CIO.

CPRE Devon Branch

CPRE Devon Branch will remain on the Charity Commission register as a "shell" charity with nominal assets purely as a precaution to preserve any future legacies that might otherwise fail.

CPRE Devon Branch was set up as a charity in April 1996 but, following the change of its charitable status, ceased functioning as a Charity in April 2018. It now has no members other than the remaining trustees. It will continue to prepare annual accounts and hold an Annual General Meeting in accordance with its constitution.

The Branch maintains its bank account with Barclays which recorded donations received of £106 during the year ended December 31, 2022. The bank charged the account with commission which left a balance at the year-end of £403.

The report and accounts were approved by the Trustees on 11th July 2023 and signed on their behalf by;

Rebecca Bartleet, Chairman.

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Devon Branch Of
The Campaign To Protect Rural England CIO
Charity number 1175228**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Devon Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England CIO for the year ended 31st December 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (1) Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) The accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Ian Barrett FCA FCIE
Barretts Chartered Accountants and Chartered Tax Advisers
22 Union Street
Newton Abbot TQ12 2JS

Dated: 11th July 2023



Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	1st JANUARY 2022	To	31st DECEMBER 2022
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Share of Subscriptions	27,625	-	-	27,625	28,116
Donations and grants	48,927	-	-	48,927	8,053
Gift Aid	8,888	-	-	8,888	2,111
Investment income and interest	910	399	-	1,309	1,865
Mason bequest held at National Office	4,872	-	-	4,872	13,359
RBS incentive and compensation	-	-	-	-	4,300
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	91,222	399	-	91,621	57,804
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	91,222	399	-	91,621	57,804

A3 Payments

Branch Director fees	23,000	3,000	-	26,000	24,000
Newsletters including Annual Report	4,736	-	-	4,736	4,301
Planning consultancy fees	3,395	-	-	3,395	5,320
Technical documents and videos	-	-	-	-	4,375
Public relations	7,625	1,500	-	9,125	12,222
Marketing	2,930	-	-	2,930	3,300
Advertising and Promotion	286	-	-	286	1,774
Grant to Wembury Marina	-	-	-	-	3,000
Grant to Devon Wildlife Trust	2,500	-	-	2,500	-
Childrens competition prizes	-	575	-	575	250
Best Churchyard competition prizes	364	-	-	364	584
Travelling expenses	438	72	-	510	504
Website maintenance	510	-	-	510	472
Other sundry expenses	12	-	-	12	100
Governance:	-	-	-	-	-
Office expenses inc. postage	4,732	-	-	4,732	4,082
Legal and Professional fees	42,222	-	-	42,222	2,210
Communications	1,093	-	-	1,093	1,093
Insurance	328	-	-	328	297
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	94,171	5,147	-	99,318	67,884

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)

	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	94,171	5,147	-	99,318	67,884

Net of receipts/(payments)

	-	2,949	-	4,748	-	-	7,697	-	10,080
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	84,134	53,402	-	137,536	147,616				
Cash funds this year end	81,185	48,654	-	129,839	137,536				

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Trustee Savings Bank	38,772	-	-
	Royal Bank of Scotland	15,983		
	Virgin Money	26,430	-	-
	United Trust Bank	-	48,654	-
	Total cash funds	81,185	48,654	-

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

OK

OK

OK

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets			-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	M & G Investments	Unrestricted	16,257	21,033
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Various equipment	Unrestricted	2,391	1,500
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Directors fees	Unrestricted	2,000	paid
	Suppliers and expenses	Unrestricted	1,270	paid
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature

Print Name

Date of approval

Michael Best

11th July 2023



Dear Editor,

May I congratulate Ivan Buxton on his excellent article in the Spring issue exposing SW Water's and Devon County Council's failure to address our current and future water requirements, needed more than ever due to the vast expansion of housing in the region.

The situation is greatly exacerbated by our Local Planning Authorities' love affair with solar farms which now cover hectares of once productive agricultural land equal, if not exceeding in area at least, one new town. The solar panels' hard surfaces prevent valuable rainfall from penetrating the ground beneath them, preventing it from filtering down to replenish our aquifers and, at the same time, creating unnecessary run-off which causes flooding down stream.

The good news is that the Government has now followed the science with policies to retain our water supplies and discourage down stream flooding by land

management covering both farmland and moorland, requiring strategic tree planting, encouraging rough grazing, filling in upland drainage ditches and mild rewilding. This the CPRE should support.

It is worth remembering that ever since humans returned to this land as the last ice age receded 15,000 years ago, we have been constantly changing it according to our requirements so that there is no such thing as a "traditional landscape". In the 19th century Dartmoor would have been unrecognisable to us now with its many sites of mineral extraction, housing and even railways.

We now have the opportunity, with careful management, to capture and preserve the rain that falls on our moorlands, reduce downstream flooding and restore our much depleted wildlife while retaining environmentally beneficial livestock grazing.

Jeremy Jessel



I came across this report and thought it might be of interest:

"The Arctic Ocean is warming up, icebergs are growing scarcer and in some places, the seals are finding the water too hot according to a report to the Commerce Department yesterday from the Consulate at Bergen, Norway.

Reports from fishermen, seal hunters, and explorers all point to a radical change in climate conditions and hitherto unheard of temperatures in the Arctic zone.

Exploration expeditions report that scarcely any ice has been met as far north as 81 degrees 29 minutes.

Soundings to a depth of 3,100 meters showed the gulf stream still very warm. Great masses of ice have been replaced

by moraines of earth and stones, the report continued, while at many points well known glaciers have entirely disappeared.

Very few seals and no white fish are found in the eastern Arctic, while vast shoals of herring and smelts which have never before ventured so far north are being encountered in the old seal fishing grounds.

Within a few years, it is predicted that due to the ice melt the sea will rise and make most coast cities uninhabitable."

I must apologise. I neglected to mention that this report was from November 2, 1922, as reported by the Associated Press and published in The Washington Post almost 101 years ago. Ivan Buxton

Two Government Consultations

Two important consultations have just been launched by the Government:

1. Local plans and future plan-making. This consultation will last for 12 weeks from 25 July to 18 October 2023.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-consultation-on-implementation-of-plan-making-reforms>

2. A new Permitted Development consultation, which includes changes to certain permitted development rights that allow agricultural diversification and development on agricultural units (inc. reuse of agricultural buildings, Class Q, use of mixed use classes etc.) This consultation will run from 24 July 2023 to 25 September 2023.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/permitted-development-rights>

Devon's Best Young Landscape Artist Competition 2023

Once again we are looking for budding young artists who can capture the beauty and variety of the county's natural landscapes, from its wild moorlands to its sheltered river valleys.

Young artists aged 18 and under have until the end of September to submit a painting, drawing, textile, collage, or mixed media artwork of a Devon view to win the coveted title of Devon's Best Young Landscape Artist 2023. The landscape could be a favourite beach or beauty spot, a local park or green space, somewhere visited on a day out or even the artist's back garden.

There are cash prizes for the winner of each category, and the best entries will go on exhibition at the Museum of Dartmoor Life in Okehampton.

We launched the competition two years ago with the support of Exeter-based landscape artist Kath Hadden, who helps choose the prize winners alongside our Director, Penny Mills. The two judges have consistently been impressed with the immense talent of the county's young artists. They hope

to receive as many original submissions as they have in previous years depicting Devon's stunning countryside and coastline.

Last year two Dartmoor scenes were chosen as the winning entries: 15-year-old Angelie Pickett's accomplished painting of Ugborough stood out in the older age group, and a vibrant painting of Belstone River by 11-year-old Sophia Lopez Clarkson won in the younger age group.

Penny says, *"Kath and I really enjoy looking through all the artwork, and we are always amazed by the talent of the children and teenagers who enter. We love their depictions of Devon's coast and countryside, and we look forward to seeing what 2023 will bring. No doubt, we will again have our work cut out deciding on this year's winners."*

The competition is simple to enter, with a cash prize of £100 for the winner of each age category. Full details of how to enter are on our website. The closing date for submissions is Saturday, 30 September 2023.



**WIN
£100**

Devon's Best Young Landscape Artist Competition 2023

Are you aged 7-11 or 12-18?

To celebrate the natural beauty of Devon's coast and countryside, Devon CPRE's 'Best Young Landscape Artist' competition is inviting young artists to submit a painting, drawing or mixed media artwork capturing a landscape of their choice. Anything goes as long as it's in Devon - a favourite beach or beauty spot, a local park or green space, somewhere visited on a day out or even the artist's own garden.

PRIZES: £100 for the winning entry in each age category and £25 runner-up prizes.

Closing date: Saturday 30 September 2023

PLUS some of the best entries will be on display in Okehampton at The Museum of Dartmoor Life.



**Museum of
Dartmoor Life**

DEVON CPRE

The Voice for Devon's Countryside
www.cpredevon.org.uk

To enter, simply post us your artwork which must be A3 or A4 size, clearly marking your name, full contact details and age to: Devon CPRE, PO Box 26, Beaworthy, EX21 5XN.

For full details visit cpredevon.org.uk

Rain and Forecasts - Christopher Darwin

Most rural dwellers are always interested in the weather; this year all of us noted the hot June and the wet July. Whether farmers or gardeners, rain matters. South West Water still has a hosepipe ban – see their website for details.

In 2020 I spent less than a tenner on a conical plastic rain gauge – this is attached to a nearby fencepost with a round rainwater downpipe bracket and inspected (and usually emptied) daily.

We live between Bude and Holsworthy and the annual rainfall is about 900 mms or 36ins.

In the month of July 2023 we had 152mms/ 6ins of rain – about twice the 2020 and 2021 figures and much more than the 14mms/ half an inch of 2022.

It was the wettest month since last November (197mms). Hot June had only 36mms, half of that fell on the 30th.

I am a bit of a weather nerd and frequently use the Met Office website www.metoffice.gov.uk daily.

Being a nerd, I look at 'pressure charts' first, which are published about three days ahead, and attempt my own forecast.

I then look at 'weather and forecast'. Put in your nearest town and get the forecast for the next seven days; there

is room for three locations. The data includes wind direction and likelihood of rain - showers are hit or miss, so percentages are given. Note the visibility – if it is 'P' poor, expect low cloud/coastal fog. It also gives forecast max and min temperatures, times of sunrise and sunset (and high tide if by the sea).

The other useful website (also free) is www.netweather.tv/live-weather/radar. This shows the rain and its intensity. Put your location in the 'Postcode Zoom' box (it will be remembered) and your red dot will show when cloud returns cover the map. The 'Anim On' covers the last two hours, so the direction of travel of the rain is evident – whether that approaching shower will miss you.

A brief word about pressure charts. In our northern hemisphere the air mass goes anti-clockwise round low pressure, clockwise round high pressure. It is easy to see whether cold air from Iceland or Scandinavia is on its way, or warm air from the south.

Incidentally, the Met Office is so sure that we are hot that the map of Europe on its video forecast is coloured either desert yellow or furnace red, occasionally green.

It used to be all green – and from my window still is.

Litter Pick - 15th September

We are delighted to be helping SW Norse once again with an annual litter pick on the Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, near their offices. Its always shocking how many bags of litter are collected.





The saga of the application for the proposal to construct an **Anaerobic Digester (AD) plant at Bycott Farm, Halberton in Mid Devon** continues. As part of our initial objection we provided the results of calculations which showed that the applicant's calculations of the output from the proposed AD were wrong and that the transport issues would be much worse than he was claiming. The applicant tried to rebuff our results. However, following further objections from us stating that the applicant appeared to be misleading the council and residents, the applicant was forced to come clean and re-issue the documentation with revised feedstock data. We have now submitted a final objection.

A very confusing planning application was made by the owner of the **Red Linhay AD plant, also at Halberton in Mid Devon**. Initially it was thought the application was to remove the planning condition which specifies the amount of feedstock. Finally it was clarified that the application was to remove a condition which limited the noise from the AD. We have objected to this proposal, and crucially the Mid Devon Environmental Health Officer objected

on the grounds that the noise must be limited to protect the amenity of local residents.

The proposed **Rutton Farm solar farm near Whimble in East Devon** was unanimously approved on 13th June by a new planning committee formed following the local council elections. No site visit was made by the new committee.

The appeal following the refusal of East Devon District Council for planning permission for the proposed **Ford Oaks solar farm near Marsh Green** will be decided following a public inquiry (APP/U1105/W/23/3320714). The local objectors, the Marsh Green Valley Protection Group, will be a Rule 6 party and will provide evidence at the inquiry, which will start on 12th September and probably last five days.

The proposed **East Rightadown, Brandis Corner** solar farm and the solar farm at **Coldharbour Farm, Ashreigney** in Torridge and the **Two Tree solar farm near Willand** in Mid Devon are all awaiting decisions. A consultation is underway for a proposed **solar farm and BESS at Deptford Farm, High Bickington in Torridge**.

The appeal made following the refusal of East Devon District Council for the proposed **Pound Road BESS, at Hawkchurch** (APP/U1105/W/23/3319803) will be decided following a public inquiry, to be held in September.

A planning application has been made to East Devon District Council to

construct a massive **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)** on a **greenfield site near Whimble**. This would be the biggest BESS yet applied for in Devon, with 488 industrial containers containing batteries with a total capacity of 300MW and lots of other infrastructure. We have written to EDDC seeking missing information



about the proposal and in due course we will be submitting an objection.

A consultation has taken place for an even bigger BESS and substation, this one to be at Junction 27 of the M5. It is called an Energy Hub and would be 400MW in capacity. J27 seems to be the location of a huge number of

proposed developments on what are currently greenfield sites.

The Xlinks project - linking the UK to wind and solar farms in Morocco - has seen another round of consultation events take place locally in Alverdiscott, Huntshaw and Bideford.

KEY	PERMITTED	PERMITTED 20-40 Acres
19 15 23 22	1- Litchardon Cross, Newton Tracey, North Devon	1 - Barton Close, Georgeham, Braunton, North Devon
	2- Dend Water, Pyworthy, Torridge	2 - Bommertown, Bottreaux Mill, South Molton, North Devon
	3- Pitworthy, Pancrasweek, Torridge	3 - Kingsland Barton, South Molton, North Devon
	4- Paytharden, Clyst Hydon, East Devon	4 - Collacott Farm, Newton Tracey, North Devon
	5- Langford, Culmpton, Mid Devon	5 - Bovey Road, Chudleigh Knighton, Teignbridge
	6 - Welbrey Barton or Bickford, Torridge	6 - Martin Farm, Whiddon Down, Okehampton, West Devon
	7 - Horton, Whimple, East Devon	7 - Willsland, Highampton, West Devon
	PENDING	8 - Tamerton Road, Roborough, West Devon
	8 - Two Tree, Old Dean Road, Willand, Mid Devon	9 - Land East of Bowdens Farm, Shillingford, Mid Devon
	9 - Coldharbour Farm, Ashreigney, Torridge	10 - Nether Mill Farm, Willand, Mid Devon
	REFUSED - AT APPEAL	11 - Redhill Farm, Burlescombe, Mid Devon
	PENDING	12 - Bulkworthy, Stibb Cross, Torridge
	10 - Marsh Green, East Devon	13 - Derriton Fields Farm, Holsworthy, Torridge
	PERMITTED	14 - Eastacombe Farm, Clawton, Torridge
	1 - Bails Wood, Brixton, Plymouth	15 - Rexon Cross, Broadwoodwidge, Torridge
	2 - Lower Langage Farm, Plympton	16 - Gammaton Moor, Alverdiscott, Torridge
	3 - Marley Thatch Farm, South Brent	17 - Land West of Parsonage Wood, Pyworthy, Torridge
	4 - Bradford Manor Farm, Pyworthy, Torridge	18 - Southlands Farm, Bridgerule, Torridge
	5 - Cinnacott, Pyworthy, Torridge	19 - Saundercroft Farm, Whimple, East Devon
	6 - Foxcombe farm, Holfacombe, Torridge	20 - Strete Farm, Whimple, East Devon
	7 - Upcott Barton, Beaford, Winkleigh, Torridge	21 - Veiges Farm, Exmouth, East Devon
	8 - Capelands Farm, Bradton Fleming, North Devon	22 - Wadbrook Farm, Hawkchurch, East Devon
	9 - Grange Hill, Bradton Fleming, North Devon	23 - Beechgrove Farm, Hawkchurch, East Devon
	10 - Coombehead Farm, Dixford, Totnes, South Hams	24 - Burrowtown Farm, Broadclyst, East Devon
	11 - South Downs, Dartington, Totnes, South Hams	25 - Bystock Farm, Exmouth, East Devon
	12 - Crannaford, Broadclyst, East Devon	26 - Francis Court Farm, Poltimore, East Devon
	13 - Coombe Farm, Woodbury, East Devon	27 - Liverton Farm, Exmouth, East Devon
	14 - Great Hoarbeare Farm, Aylesbeare, East Devon	28 - Newlands Farm, Axminster, East Devon
	15 - Stonebarrow Farm, Hawkchurch, East Devon	29 - Newton Down Farm, Newton Ferrers, South Hams
	16 - Hemerton, Plympton, South Hams	30 - Oldstone Farm, Blackawton, Totnes, South Hams
	17 - Rydon Farm, Two Mile Oak, Teignbridge	31 - Parkfield Farm, Ashburton, South Hams
	18 - Sawmills, Ashcombe Estate, Ashcombe, Teignbridge	32 - Place Barton Farm, Moreleigh, Totnes, South Hams
	19 - Beaver Grange Farm, Axminster, East Devon	33 - Station Road, Tamerton Foliot, South Hams
	PENDING	34 - Blue Post Lane, Halberton, Totnes, South Hams
	20 - Higher Haakerland, Aylesbeare, East Devon	35 - Hazard Farm, Harberton, Totnes, South Hams
		PENDING: 36 - East Rightadown Farm, Brandis Corner, Torridge.

I hope I'm not totally unrealistic in believing that the Government and Local Authorities try their best to produce a planning system that is both fair and practical in encouraging enterprise and accommodating those in housing need, while protecting the integrity of the countryside.

However the planning authorities are up against formidable forces with unlimited financial backing aimed at turning the English countryside into a source of financial profit through industrial and housing development. Furthermore, that profit is diverted ever increasingly into private overseas bank accounts from which the British economy makes little gain, while the English countryside suffers significant loss.

A prime example was the case of the CEO of a national building company who was retiring with a bonus of £100 million but was shamed into accepting a mere £75m when the figures were disclosed. Where did the profits come from? From building houses over vast areas of rural England.

Class Q Conversions

At the lowest end of the scale, the Government under David Cameron had introduced, in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), a rule that allowed redundant agricultural buildings in the countryside to be converted into low cost dwellings to provide inexpensive rural housing, primarily for local workers, with minimal planning restrictions. This is now called Class Q development and there are still several such applications in every week's planning list, which the Local

Planning Authority (LPA) finds very hard to refuse without risk of being over-ruled on appeal.

The aim of Class Q is quite reasonable and should be of little detriment to the countryside but of course Planning Consultancies have homed in on this tiny loophole in the system and found ways for developers to profit from it. Every month there is a full page advertisement by such a consultancy in the NFU Countryside magazine offering their services to assist in making planning applications, often to upgrade a Class Q consent to a full-scale demolition and rebuild project. This can produce a luxury country house in a remote rural setting where no local workers could afford to live and which the normal planning policies to protect the countryside would never have allowed. The original Class Q conversion consent is quoted as a 'fall-back position' which makes it hard for the LPA to uphold a refusal of consent for the enhanced development on appeal.

This course of procedure has become so commonplace of late that there are as many 'enhanced' applications with a Class Q fall-back as there are new Class Q applications themselves. The original NPPF intention of refurbishing redundant farm buildings to house rural workers has thus become another opportunity to cash in on the demand for executive dwellings and holiday lets.

Section 106 Payments

It is, of course, unthinkable that developers might employ bribery to obtain planning consent, and any such practice would be strictly stamped out

as illegal under British and international law.

However legislation allows for S106 payments to be made by mutual agreement to compensate LPAs for additional services required and for offsetting loss of biodiversity occasioned by new developments in the countryside.

Local Authorities routinely require substantial payments from developers under S106 agreements for provision of facilities such as school places, recreation grounds, public transport, road improvements etc., while contributions towards enhancement of biodiversity in nearby nature reserves, AONB and for example the Northern Devon Biosphere can amount to hundreds of thousands pounds for a sizeable housing development in the countryside.

Even Parish Councils can be offered S106 incentives such as improvements to the village playing field should a small housing development be approved. If the Parish Council are objecting to the application, perhaps this might influence their views, but somehow it does not amount to bribery.

Other conditions can be agreed under S106, such as all the details of landscaping, tree planting (and protection and maintenance), but the LPA seldom has the facilities to supervise and enforce these conditions effectively.

The most important failing of an S106 agreement is that the developer can subsequently claim that changing circumstances result in the S106 provisions rendering the proposed development financially 'unviable', and the Government guidelines allow this as a valid reason to modify the S106 in the developer's favour. The usual

application of this let-out is to reduce the proportion of 'affordable dwellings' in a housing development to well below the quantity defined in the Local Development Plan.

The developer must produce a 'viability assessment' by a qualified assessor of course, but everyone knows when an accountant is asked "How viable is this project?" the answer will be "How viable do you want it to be!?".

Biodiversity Offsetting

At the latest iteration, planning policy requires development proposals to provide for at least 10% increase in Biodiversity. That means after development the site must provide an improvement of at least 10% on its pre-development biodiversity. That surely must be a great environmental plus point! But how is biodiversity measured? - now there's the rub!

The developer must engage the services of a qualified ecologist, member of the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM), to conduct an ecological survey of the site prior to submitting a planning application, and this is paid for by the applicant - - so no conflict of interest there then! However it may well turn out that the site has been 'tidied up', within permitted limits of course, to facilitate the assessment.

Usually, where agricultural land is to be developed into a housing estate, it will turn out that the proposed houses and gardens, with the promise of new trees and hedges, nest boxes, bat bricks, swift holes, and hedgehog highways through garden fences, will easily provide the required biodiversity enhancement. Whether these will ever be enforced or monitored is another matter.

The biodiversity of the site before and after development is measured through a 'Biodiversity Metric' devised by boffins at Natural England using computer technology of a complexity that I cannot understand, let alone describe here.

Where the pre-development ecology of the site is so favourable that it cannot be adequately compensated for in the development itself, the 'Metric' will

allocate a financial value to the anticipated loss of biodiversity and this money will be allocated to provide improvements in the biodiversity of other sites in the parish, or the district, or the Biosphere. Whether the resident wildlife will appreciate this biodiversity offsetting may or may not be assessed in due course.

What's in a View - John Collins



The fourth (and last) in a series of articles about how we appreciate landscapes.

Devon has much to offer by way of attractive scenery, and has escaped the worst ravages of industrialisation. But landscapes rarely 'stand still' for long periods, and the exercise of power, and perhaps ensuing conflicts, is evident in almost any view.

Traditionally, much of the power in rural England was represented by the church or manor house, whereas today its residence is more often out of sight. Changes in farming policy and practices, for instance, might result in significant landscape change. Close to Yelland, where I live, several miles of hedgerows were removed in the middle

decades of the last century, but fortunately many of the old field boundaries remain, together with patches of woodland. Such changes, however, can result in significant loss of amenity and wildlife, and lead to unwanted flooding.

Planning controls have largely determined how much our landscapes have broadly changed within living memory. Greater protections, such as afforded by AONB status, have prevented what would surely by now have been large scale despoilment in those areas. Locally, the parish of Braunton also provides examples of wildlife habitat-related designations.

My view from home across the lower Taw estuary illustrates some

unsuccessful campaigns to halt wind turbine and housing developments. Highly contentious has been the proposal for housing, etc on the former Yelland power station site, passed on appeal last year, never mind its polluted state and the disproportionate environmental cost of an appropriate remedy, its central riverside location on the floodplain of this beautiful wildlife-rich estuary, the imposition of intrusive tall buildings, and no provision of much needed 'affordable' housing.

In Philip Larkin's early 1970s poem 'Going, Going,' which includes the line, 'And that will be England gone,' he makes particular reference to the enhanced financial return of building houses in estuaries!

My view from home speaks also of other kinds of power and conflict. The Chivenor military base is an obvious example. Braunton Burrows and their neighbouring waters and shores were used significantly for military training purposes during WW2, and to an extent that has continued to this day. In other respects, the use of the river by various interest groups, including fishing, gravel extraction, different pleasure craft and nature conservation, has needed management measures.

In Elizabethan times, the river Taw was plied by sailing vessels trading to and from Barnstaple. Today, the former Yelland power station jetty, built to receive coal between the 1950s and 1980s, is once again being used in the transportation of bulky materials.

I have glimpses of the Tarka Trail, along the course of the former Barnstaple to Bideford railway line, which is a much

valued recreational asset. I can't see our main road, though it is barely a hundred yards from home, but the volume of traffic along it has been steadily increasing since a welcome reduction in 1989 when the North Devon Link Road opened. Fortunately, Yelland still quietsens down by late evening, when bird calls from the riverside can be heard, as well as the incoming tide more than three miles away on Bideford bar.

The sky over our estuary is traversed by numerous flocks of birds as well as some aircraft, though the latter less so since the Chivenor base ceased to be RAF in the 1990s. There are now a number of sets of bright lights, including at a depot on the Yelland side of the river, but still none at all on Braunton Burrows - for which we can be thankful! - apart from a flashing red light on Crow Point.

There is far more to any landscape than simply what we see. And what is beyond the horizon – both literally and metaphorically – also affects how we see it.

In the seventeenth century, Robert Burton wrote, 'A good prospect alone will ease melancholy.' Despite ongoing adverse changes, I hope people will be able to continue to enjoy such views in Devon for many years to come.

The photo, which includes from left to right beyond the river, Braunton, Chivenor military base (behind the pylon), Heanton Punchardon (in front of woodland) and wind turbines on the fringes of Fullabrook Down, was taken last October from above Yelland.



With apologies to Sir Winston Churchill for the misappropriation but, “Never in the field of human conflict has a term been so over-used and liberally applied as the word, crisis.”

Put alternatively, and drawing again upon another recently historic character, former PM Jim Callaghan, said, “Crisis? What Crisis?”

Almost daily we are told about one crisis or another, mostly related to that other overworked aspect, “Climate Change.”

Repeat something often enough and it becomes a fact and whilst I would be pilloried for not accepting, “Houston, we have a problem,” with the pollution of the planet, we should treat the measurement of a crisis with a little respect.

Suzanne Vega once sang, “If language were liquid, it would be rushing in,” which is quite poetic, rather like saying, “language is king,” where the word king literally means invested in authority either extensive or limited.

The point I am labouring here is that over time the meaning or emphasis of a word changes to suit the

circumstances and that is precisely the problem with repeatedly chanting the expression, “crisis.”

Without delving deeply into the origin of the word it is simple to check a dictionary or thesaurus for the meaning. Chambers Etymological Dictionary printed in 1960 for example, defines crisis as: “A point or time for deciding anything. Decisive moment or turning point.”

Moving onto the Oxford Dictionary of 1985 the description becomes, “Turning point. Decisive moment. Time of acute danger or difficulty.” Six years later in 1991 a slight change is made by the same publication, truncating the final aspect to, “Time of acute danger,” by removing the word, “difficulty.” Presumably the assumption being any danger would self-evidently be difficult. Collins Thesaurus in 2001 described a crisis as, “Crucial stage. Turning point. Time of acute trouble,” and coming to the present online spell checker, a choice of alternative words is given including, “disaster, catastrophe, emergency, calamity and predicament.” Perversely in my opinion, it also

provides the word “crunch,” which if presented to the same spell checking software says it means chomp, chew, or munch. I rather like the idea of chomping my way through a changing climate.

Clearly the 21st Century interpretation promotes a crisis into a stage of cruciality, as opposed to the 20th Century when we were told by Michael Winner, to not, “Make a drama out of a crisis!” Both expressions are somewhat removed from the source of derivation, which was the Greek word *Krisis*, meaning to decide. I suppose by deciding to change the meaning, society has enabled the word to evolve

so that it fits the mantra of the day.

Unfortunately, by insisting we have a, “Climate Crisis,” every time the wind blows strongly, it rains heavily or the sun shines brightly or referring to the, “Cost of Living Crisis,” in every news bulletin, cheapens the word.

Also, it does little or nothing to alleviate any perceived danger or difficulty and simply deflects from the need to decide because, with the 'cost of living crisis, nature crisis, climate crisis, environmental crisis, ecological crisis, housing crisis, energy crisis', etc etc, Are we are suffering from 'crisis' fatigue?

HOW YOU CAN HELP US TO PROTECT DEVON, LONG TERM

Our members are a special breed of people, who love Devon and want to see it preserved and protected for generations to come. That's what we're here for.

If you'd like to play your part, as well as being a member (and remaining a member even after that immediate threat to your locality has faded into history!) there are three key ways you can leave your mark permanently on the Devon landscape – by leaving it as it should be.

DONATIONS

Membership of Devon CPRE – which includes membership of the CPRE national charity – costs £3 to £5 a month. It's much appreciated, but it doesn't provide us with all the fighting funds we need to do the job we're renowned for: fighting off inappropriate planning proposals and guarding the countryside against degradation.

So, if you can afford a little more per month, or have a little extra money you'd like to do something worthwhile with, please consider becoming a Devon CPRE Donor.

LEGACIES

Leaving Devon CPRE a legacy in your Will is a wonderful (and tax-efficient) way of leaving a gift to future generations by helping us preserve the county we love.

Just tell your solicitor or will-maker that you would like to leave something to 'The Devon Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England CIO', charity number 1175228.

LAND

If you have a parcel of land – a meadow, a copse, a special place that gives you joy – that you would like to see protected in perpetuity, you could leave it in our care. We will provide a covenant to ensure that your special place is safe from development or despoliation, and used to provide rich habitats for wildlife and joy to future generations.

To find out more about how to donate to Devon CPRE, please contact us at: director@cpredevon.org.uk

Putting Nature First (Finally) - Penny Mills

There's a new buzz word on the lips of the local planning authorities, conservationists and developers. Well, four words to be precise: Local Nature Recovery Strategies.

Devon supports an amazing diversity of landscapes that underpin every element of our lives, and it's now (finally) being recognised that the health of our natural environment has deteriorated hugely in recent decades for a variety of reasons.

I recently heard all about the aims and objectives of these strategies, called LNRS for short, at a meeting for an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Local Nature Recovery Strategies are DEFRA's latest approach to setting priorities for nature at a local level in England, and a new statutory requirement under the Environment Act 2021. Basically, they aim to stimulate discussion about wildlife and the natural environment to encourage action to stem further decline and, where possible, help nature to recover. So far, so good.

So, I asked, what do they mean in planning terms? How will they curb inappropriate development in Devon, and put the onus on developers to deliver the biodiversity net gains they so often promise in their planning applications (but, sadly, often don't deliver on)? The answer was less than encouraging. In fact, it sounded distinctly limp. I was told the strategies would 'have regard' in the planning system. Regard to what, one might ask? I wanted to hear that the LNRS would have weight and teeth in the planning system.

It seems obvious to me that if we keep building on our green spaces then nature invariably pays the cost, and no strategy - however well intentioned - is going to help nature recover once it's buried under feet of concrete.

We are often accused of 'nimbyism' for caring about the visual impact of developments and the lack of proper infrastructure for large new housing developments. That's not by any means the whole picture. One of the reasons Devon CPRE and, of course, our members have been concerned at the rapid development of so much of our countryside is because we are concerned about, you guessed, the impact on nature!

I don't think it's unfair to say that Central Government, local planning authorities and planning inspectors are locking the gate after the horse has bolted by now asking us all to prioritise Nature. It's what we've been saying for years!

Wind turbines are known to kill birds and bats, and we have long opposed the development of onshore wind farms in Devon. If Labour wins the next election, there's concern that more wind farms will be permitted. How does this fit with nature recovery? Solar farms on agricultural land are another case in point. High fencing means wildlife can't move about easily, it's been reported that bat activity is reduced, and the use of herbicides and pesticides to control weeds also impact soil quality. Every planning application that's granted consent has some impact on Nature. The question is, when do we say enough is enough?

Our Response to the Latest Government Pledge Not to Concrete Over the Countryside for New Housing

We have campaigned for many years for the right type and number of new homes to be built in the right places at prices local people can afford.

Responding to the latest announcements from PM Rishi Sunak and Housing Secretary Michael Gove, Devon CPRE Director Penny Mills says: *"While it's heartening to hear Mr Sunak promise not to continue to 'concrete over the countryside' and that Mr Gove wants to make it easier to convert empty city centre premises into flats and houses, let's not forget that a General Election is looming!*

Our charity has long campaigned for the majority of new homes to be built on brownfield sites in urban areas and not on greenfield sites in open countryside. We have also consistently questioned the Government's notional target of delivering 300,000 new homes a year. Five years ago, Devon CPRE

commissioned an independent report into local housing needs. It showed that the Government's annual housebuilding target far exceeded what was actually needed in this part of the country. Four years ago, we invited the then housing minister to attend our seminar in Exeter to discuss the findings of the report. No one listened, and the Government carried on allowing developers to build the wrong type of houses in the wrong places, more often than not without local support.

With a General Election on the horizon, Rishi Sunak and Michael Gove have apparently seen the light! We believe actions speak louder than words. There have been decades of inaction as a merry-go-round of housing ministers has failed to deliver a sustainable long-term housing strategy. Let's hope that this time around, they deliver on their promises."

Temporary Recreational Campsites

The outcome of the recent government consultation on permitted development rights that included consideration of extending the permitted development time period for tented camping from 28 to 60 days (for up to 50 pitches) has been converted to law through enactment of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (England) (Amendment) Order 2023 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2023/747/article/3/made> and provisions in "Class BC – temporary recreational campsites". This came into force on 26th July 2023.

The same provisions have changed the status of motorhomes/campervans to differentiate them from caravans, instead classing them as "a motor vehicle designed or adapted for human habitation" and enabling their use of Class BC temporary recreational campsites.

Unlike with Exempted Certified Sites, this new 60 day permitted development provision is accompanied by conditions (BC.2a-d of the order) a requirement to provide:

- Toilet and waste disposal facilities.
- Prior notification (each year) to the local planning authority.



In 1938 the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, as CPRE was then known, made a short promotional film which was shown in cinemas throughout the UK. Not only was it advertising the charity, but the film was highlighting the need for this country to designate national parks and urging public support. One of the key aims was to protect the unspoilt countryside from pylons. To quote from the film:

Let us have the great open country. For country like this the CPRE has been fighting a battle for many years, fighting to preserve such unspoilt beauty as this, from unsightly pylons.

CPRE had indeed been battling to protect the countryside from *unsightly pylons* since its inception in 1926, with many eminent people joining the cause. The Times letters page from the 1920s and 30s would regularly feature

the issue. The matter was of great importance to CPRE.

But now, nearly 100 years later, and as we approach the centenary of CPRE itself, it appears that the countryside will be faced with more *unsightly pylons*, not because of the basic aim of enabling everybody in the country to have electricity, but this time because of the need to expand the grid as a result of the government's pledge to reach NetZero.

Today, new solid T-pylons are being introduced rather than continuing to use the existing lattice pylons, the ones with which we are all familiar. These T-pylons are very controversial, with local residents saying that they are noisier than their predecessors, interfere with WiFi, damage the value of their homes and have also resulted in the closure of some local tourist businesses. It is also

claimed that being solid structures, the T-Pylons are more of an eye-sore than the traditional lattice pylons.

In the early days of the use of electricity (the 1900s) there were no common standards, and the supply of electricity was fragmented, with towns and cities having their own power stations and no standard voltages or frequencies. Construction of the national grid started in the 1930s, the aim being to link the power stations together and to ensure that electricity could be delivered across the whole country with common standards. It ultimately enabled the transfer of electricity from the big power stations in the Midlands and North of England (where there was plenty of coal and cooling water) to the London area where demand for electricity was highest. It used the design of lattice pylons that we are familiar with today. The national grid was a very efficient system and in the 1950s the maximum voltage grid lines were upgraded from 132kV, firstly to 275kV and then to 400kV. The national grid worked very well and reliably, with bigger and more efficient power stations being built closer to the demand centres, keeping transmission costs and electricity costs low.

However, the introduction of intermittent renewable energy generators, such as wind turbines, meant that a lot of electricity was generated remotely from the major demand locations. This resulted in the need for new grid lines, such as the sub-sea cables between Scotland and Wales or Scotland and Yorkshire. In addition, the intermittent nature of these

renewables means that they have low capacity factors, in other words the average power is much less than the installed capacity (the peak power). For example the average power of solar farms is about 10% of the peak power, the average power of onshore wind farms is about 20 to 25% of the peak power and the average power of offshore wind farms is about 30 to 40% of the peak power. A grid line connection to a solar farm has to have the capacity to deliver the peak power on a sunny day, but on average it only delivers 10% of the capacity. Thus in order to accommodate that short period when it is really sunny, the grid connection is 10 times bigger than necessary. Similarly, in order to accommodate the short periods when the wind is blowing strongly the grid connection to an onshore wind farm is about 4 to 5 times bigger and that to an offshore wind farm is about 3 times bigger than necessary. This results in more, bigger grid lines, which is damaging to the landscape, is very wasteful and is very costly to electricity consumers.



We now learn that the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) is devising sweeping planning reforms because the government is increasingly concerned that the growing demand for electricity (as households are forced to switch to electric cars and heat pumps) could outpace the capacity of the national grid. Simultaneously the government is also forcing a massive national expansion in both wind and solar power.

The planning reforms would reduce the time to gain planning consent for new grid lines (consisting of overhead cables and pylons) and mandate government-appointed Planning Inspectors to approve projects regardless of local opposition. Of course as we in Devon are all aware, the grid lines are all built in the countryside, not in cities, so just like with wind farms and solar farms, it is the countryside and people living in the countryside who are affected, whereas city-dwellers remain unaffected (except for bigger electricity bills).

National Grid is very keen on planning reforms which will enable them to build new grid lines wherever they chose. This is because National Grid's profits are tied to the amount of investment it makes in new infrastructure. National Grid has claimed that it will need to build about seven times as much infrastructure in the next seven or eight years as was built in the last 32 years. Big profits for National Grid then; what a surprise! The government is also very keen on planning reforms because without the new grid lines its plans for

NetZero by 2050 will fail miserably. But it would appear that the government does not care about the impact on the countryside and its landscape or on the people who live in the countryside. Local democracy is being cast aside in pursuit of its NetZero policy, which will inevitably fail as it is unaffordable and depends on technologies which currently do not exist.

So what can we do about the unfolding disaster for the countryside? We know that the main opposition parties are hell-bent on bringing forward even more drastic NetZero plans. So things will not improve after next year's general election, whatever the result. All parties are keen on closing reliable power stations and building more unreliable wind and solar farms. We know that building expensive battery storage facilities will not help - they are akin to putting a sticking plaster on an amputated limb. There are only two possible solutions. One is to convince a majority of MPs of the disaster that their policies will result in. The second is to see what happens if the coming winter is cold with a prolonged wind lull, resulting in widespread power rationing (rolling power cuts) or blackouts - something that we associate with developing countries. This situation would be a disaster, resulting in many deaths of the vulnerable, but it might bring politicians to their senses. At Devon CPRE we will be trying to educate our Devon MPs.

A Call for Help - Sir Geoffrey Cox KC MP



The Government is currently considering the conditions on which it will lift the effective moratorium on onshore wind turbine developments, which has been in place for over 8 years.

Many will remember the deeply disturbing proliferation of planning applications to build these gigantic and unsuitable machines in Torridge and West Devon under the Labour and the Coalition Governments. Commercial developers with deep pockets and the promise of huge returns were able to ride roughshod over the objections of the inhabitants of our villages and hamlets who felt powerless to stop them.

On the formation of the new Conservative Government in 2015, with my full support the moratorium was enacted by changes to the planning rules – changes the Liberal Democrats had vetoed while in coalition - at which time there were some 90 applications in the planning pipeline in Torridge

alone. By 2014, I had taken the view that the threat was so great to the fundamental character of our landscape that I was objecting to each proposed commercial wind turbine development in the constituency. I want to safeguard our rural villages and parishes from another onslaught of the type we then faced. I am afraid that the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats are committed to removing any serious constraint on future wind turbine development in areas such as ours.

Conservative policy is to permit the construction of commercial wind turbines only where local consent for the development is clearly demonstrated. However, how that consent will be demonstrated will be critical to effective democratic control by our local communities.

It would be immensely helpful to me in making representations to the Government, and show the extent of feeling on this subject, if local members of the CPRE would write to me with their views as to how this should be achieved. It is essential that the Government strongly entrenches this policy in the planning rules, and I am doing all I can to encourage it to do so.

If you can help, please email me at tellgeoffrey@geoffreycox.co.uk.

Planning Applications and Appeals

We continue to be incredibly busy responding to a great many and a large variety of planning applications around the county, many of which our members have brought to our attention - thank you. We continue to keep our excellent planning consultant, Jo Widdecombe, very busy. If

you are concerned about a planning issue near you which you think might be of interest to us, please get in touch - drop Penny an email on info@cpredevon.org.uk - and remember to let us know the planning application reference number and please give us as much notice as possible!

Some of the recent applications we've submitted responses to include:

Solar Farm, Land east of Rutton Farm, Whimble, East Devon	Permitted
150 dwellings, Hartnoll Farm, Tiverton (Public Inquiry September)	At appeal
Retail development, Whiddon Down	At appeal
Dwelling, Yelverton	At appeal
161 dwellings, Fremington	At appeal
Hybrid application, Stonelands Cross, Rackenford	At appeal
5 Dwellings, Parkham	At appeal
Solar Farm, Marsh Green, East Devon (Public Inquiry September)	At appeal
Solar Farm, Higher Hawkerland, Aylesbeare, East Devon	Pending decision
Solar Farm, East Rightadown, Brandis Corner, Torridge	Pending decision
Solar Farm, Coldharbour Farm, Ashreigney, Torridge	Pending decision
Solar Farm, Dean Hill Road, Willand, Mid Devon	Pending decision
Battery Energy Storage System, Whimble, East Devon	Pending decision
Battery Energy Storage System, Hawkchurch, East Devon	Pending decision
Removal of conditions, Red Linhay, Halberton	Pending decision
Anaerobic Digestion plant, Bycott Farm, Halberton	Pending decision
450 dwellings, Brynsworthy, Barnstaple	Pending decision
101 dwellings, Fremington	Pending decision
22 lodges, Combe Martin	Pending decision
105 dwellings, Woolacombe	Pending decision
Yelland - discharge condition	Pending decision
5 dwellings, Atherington	Pending decision
22 industrial units, Lake, Barnstaple	Pending decision
Hotel and Caravan Park, Holsworthy	Pending decision
93 lodges, Dolton	Pending decision
Wolborough Barton link road	Pending decision
Dwelling, Penstone, Colebrooke	Pending decision
130 dwellings, Seaton	Pending decision
155 dwellings, Witheridge	Pending decision
46 dwellings, Ilfracombe	Pending decision
19 dwellings, Highampton	Pending decision
77 dwellings, Brixham	Pending decision
Dwelling, Bradworthy	Withdrawn
25 dwellings, Northlew	Withdrawn

Devon CPRE - Who We Are



Robin Hogg, Vice President



Penny Mills, Director



Rebecca Bartleet, Chairman



Mike Best, Treasurer and Trustee



Steve Crowther, Trustee



Phillip Bratby, Trustee



Ivan Buxton, Trustee



Dale Hall, Trustee

Devon CPRE Membership

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP ONLY

£3 per month - £36 per annum

Stuck for a gift idea? Membership of Devon CPRE makes an ideal gift.

Membership of the Devon branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England helps to protect the county and countryside we all love.

Devon CPRE is the only local, independent charity working to protect our precious countryside, green spaces and unique landscapes across Devon - for the benefit of all.

Once farmland and green spaces are built on, they're lost forever.

We know that new homes and other developments are needed in Devon to maintain a vibrant economy, but should this be at the expense of our tranquil and beautiful environment or our food producing farmland?

FAMILY / ORGANISATION TOWN / PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

£5 per month - £60 per annum

Should Devon's countryside be a dumping ground for large commercial energy installations? Are we building the type and quantity of new homes Devon really needs? Are developers and planners being held properly to account?

Devon CPRE membership makes a crucial contribution to our work saving the countryside.

As an independent charity, Devon CPRE relies solely on memberships, donations and legacies. Please consider a membership gift and help us to protect Devon's precious countryside and green spaces, or ask a neighbour to join and help us.

To join or donate to Devon CPRE go to our website www.cpredevon.org.uk.

Membership for Town and Parish Councils

Devon CPRE has proven expertise in planning matters. Did you know that we currently have over 70 town and parish councils and other organisations across the county who are already members and regularly benefit from our advice to respond to local planning applications? If yours isn't a member, please encourage them to join. For just £5 a month we could help your town/parish council too.



Membership Form

Your Details

Title: First Name:

Surname:

Organisation (If applicable):
.....

Address:
.....
.....

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:
.....

Staying in Touch

Your support is important to us so we would like to keep in touch.

CPRE and Devon CPRE will write to you about your membership and other things we think would be of interest to you. This may include sending you information about our work, campaigns, fundraising, events and other ways you can keep the fight for our countryside going.

Please let us know below if you would be happy to hear from us by:

☐ Email ☐ Telephone ☐ Post

Please be assured we do not share, sell or swap your information with other organisations outside of CPRE and our county branch network.

Don't forget you can choose to change how we communicate with you or ask to stop hearing from us at any time. Simply email us at supporterservices@cpre.org.uk or call 0800 163680.

Your Privacy: CPRE and Devon CPRE holds and manages your details in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). To find out more about how we manage your personal information please see our Privacy Policy at www.cpre.org.uk/privacypolicy.

Your Membership

I would like to join Devon CPRE at £ per year

I wish to pay this: ☐ Annually
☐ Monthly at £

I wish to pay by:

☐ Cheque ☐ Direct Debit ☐ Debit/Credit Card

Cheque Payment

Please enclose a cheque made payable to **CPRE**, and return to Devon CPRE .

Direct Debit Payment

Please return this form to Devon CPRE and we will send you a Direct Debit mandate to complete.

Debit / Credit Card Payment

Please complete the information below and return to Devon CPRE .

Card type: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Amex

Card Number:

Start Date

/

Expiry Date

/

CVC

Name on card:

Signature:
.....

Giftaid It

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

Thank you!

☐ Please 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 taxpayer 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:



New housing adding to pressure on water supplies

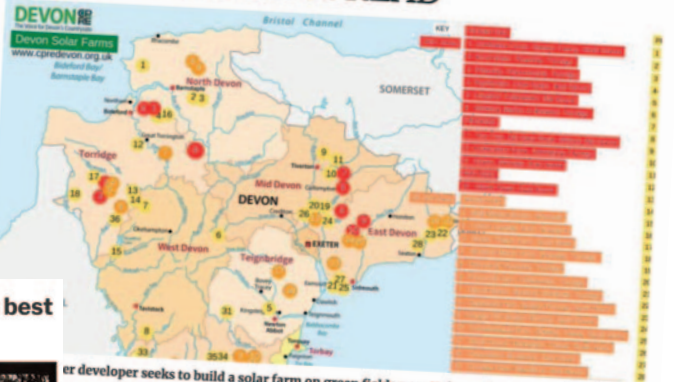
Environmental pressure group Devon CPRE campaign to protect the countryside and natural resources. Tru Buxton says poor planning for large housing developments is pushing summer water supplies to 'tipping point'.

LAST week, the *Western Morning News* reported that South West Water is asking residents and businesses to cut their water usage to ease the pressure on reservoir levels ahead of the peak summer months. Unless you have been paddling in an oasis elsewhere, you will know that Devon and Cornwall are already under a hosepipe ban, despite a soggy spring. You don't need a crystal ball to know that the resumption in the South West

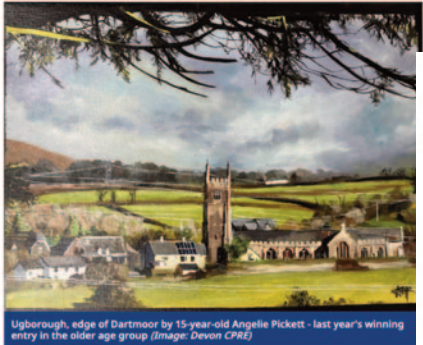
the water company's viability of supply, let alone displacement waste. Devon CPRE, by change, SWW should object to the glut of developments on farmland, these developments contributing to another home-produced food

moorlandertoday

DEVON'S SOLAR SPREAD



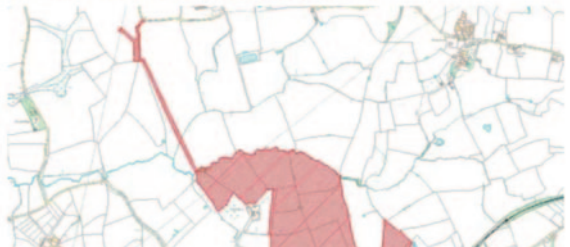
Competition aims to find Devon's best young landscape artist



Young artists who can capture the beauty and variety of the county's natural landscapes are being invited to enter a competition with the chance to win £100.

er developer seeks to build a solar farm on green fields near Holsworthy, Penny Mills of Devon charity CPRE explains why enough is enough. This isn't the first time

Countryside campaign group 'extremely disappointed' at green light for 'industrial-scale' solar farm in East Devon



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Devon CPRE
is a member of the
CPRE network



The
countryside
charity