



# NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2006

# NEWS NEWS NEWS

## THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

by Alan Johnson

Following a very successful Green Belt conference at Kelham Hall organised by the branch, and attended by 86 planners, councillors, resident and environmental groups, CPRE members as well as developers, CPRE was asked (as were the Home Builders Federation) to contribute to the review of the Nottinghamshire / Derbyshire Green Belt. Green Belts serve 5 main purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Over the last 20 years, no settlements within the Greater Nottingham area have merged (although some are now closer than they were); the general countryside is relatively safeguarded from encroachment; and even more significantly urban regeneration within the city of Nottingham is occurring. Indeed, whilst conducting the Nottingham Urban Capacity Study, the City Council realised that there was sufficient land for 16,000 dwellings - double the guideline in the 1996 Structure Plan.

However, one area of concern has consistently come to light in the local plan review process - the gradual erosion of the inner edge of the green belt. Unfortunately there are a number of examples, but the most blatant is the proposed development at Top Wighay Farm, north of Hucknall, which has extended Greater Nottingham to within ¼ mile of Newstead village, which itself adjoins the Mansfield / Sutton / Kirkby corridor.

The Green Belt review was requested by regional planning guidance, to ensure that there is sufficient supply of land to meet development needs for the

next 20 years. The methodology adopted by the project team of officers from Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils, has been firstly to rate areas of land in accordance with their importance for the green belt purposes listed at the beginning of this article, and secondly to evaluate potential extensions to the Green Belt in the same way.

The analysis concluded that the area between Nottingham and Derby and the areas immediately to the north are generally the most important Green Belt areas. South and east of Nottingham the Green Belt serves fewer purposes because it is not separating major areas of development.

None of the potential extensions to the Green Belt scored as highly in the analysis as the most important existing areas of Green Belt. However, areas to the south of Long Eaton and immediately around Derby scored similarly to the existing Green Belt areas to the south and east of Nottingham. As a branch, we are wary of such an approach as it suggests a lesser tier of Green Belt for those areas of medium importance, compared to those of higher importance. It is our view that all areas of the Green Belt are important and that we'll always fight to retain land in the Green Belt, wherever it is situated. Where do we go from here? We have commented on this paper, which will, when finalised, feed into the choices at sub-regional level about where to direct development (which may result in land being taken



Dr. Peter Toghill speaks at the Green Belt Conference

out of the Green Belt) and possible options for extending the Green Belt.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2007

**Lecture "You and the Environment"**  
by Derek Clark, Thursday 1st February  
Southwell Minster Great Hall  
7.30 for 8.00 (flyer enclosed)

**New Year's Lunch**  
Sunday 25th February  
The Red House, Kelham at 12.30  
(flyer enclosed)

**Newark and Notts. Show**  
12th and 13th May  
Display stand by Nottinghamshire CPRE (Volunteers please)

**Annual General Meeting**  
Monday 30th April  
Venue Thrumpton Hall, off A453

**Summer Picnic**  
Sunday 24th June  
in Welbeck Estate, courtesy of Mr and Mrs William Parente

**Possible Autumn Outing**  
Hockerton Eco-Housing project

Newsletter Photography by Rosamund Macfarlane

# MOBILE HOMES & OTHER HOUSING VICTORIES

by Frank Thomas

To the great relief of the residents at Gamston their close-knit community and affordable "Park Homes" have been saved by the Inspector's decision. The proposal to clear half the site and replace existing homes with 2- and 3-bedroomed houses had originally been accepted by the planners at Rushcliffe, but strong community responses, ably supported by CPRE, persuaded councillors in the development committee to reject the proposal by 17:4 against. The subsequent developer's appeal against this democratic decision was summarily dismissed by the Inspector. Any further proposals will have to be discussed and agreed with the residents!

This apparently "minor" victory is nonetheless very important as a precedent that accepts the intrinsic value of existing communities, and as a recognition of "Park Homes" as genuine affordable alternatives to "bricks and mortar", especially for the elderly and

those of modest means. The mobile home site had existed 20 years before the surrounding Gamston estate.

We also managed to convince the Inspector, tasked with deciding where 1200 new homes should go in Rushcliffe, that the NCC proposed site at Adbolton would be a touch too wet, being located in the Trent flood plain, very near to the river. He also recommended that the much drier site proposed on Sharphill Wood by Rushcliffe BC was not as suitable as a more general distribution of new houses around the borough. The planners disagreed and the Borough decided to reject the Inspector's decision. However, at a subsequent large public meeting, a narrow majority of dissident

borough councillors won the day, despite a consequent need to revamp the Local Plan, which will now run out of time. We take the exercising of our democratic rights seriously in Rushcliffe!



Mobile Homes come in all shapes and sizes

## THE WIND OF CHANGE

by Brooke Sidebottom

Britain's landscape is being radically changed in various ways, but none more drastic than by approval being given for the erection of thousands of towering wind generators that will soon appear across every county and around our coastline. This is against strong opposition from CPRE and other environmental bodies, as well as fierce opposition from the general public closely affected by the rapid spread of WIND FARMS across our green and pleasant land.

In Scotland and its offshore islands 6,600 turbines are already planned, many of which are up and running. Three wind farms are in operation around our coastline, 18 more

are planned and 15 more under consideration, despite the fact that Centrica, the UK's largest offshore wind operator, is already facing possible losses of about £93m.

Further doubts arise now that National Grid have stated that wind farm developers who have applied for connections to the electricity grid must put up financial guarantees. A total of £500m is sought from the top 20 developers, to be defrayed only as production goes ahead. Several have withdrawn their applications.

In Nottinghamshire 2 applications are nearing completion - one at Lindhurst near Blidworth for 5 turbines 125m (410ft) tall. The second

is to be positioned between Eakring and Bilsborpe with 7 slightly smaller turbines. Two other sites are being considered, one at Crow Hill east of Retford, the other possibly at Gringley Carr.

Bearing in mind the high costs of construction and poor levels of efficiency (28% for onshore turbines), the viability of such projects should be questioned. The payback period in terms of energy consumption for site preparation, supply of materials, manufacture of plant, equipment, transport etc, also deserves serious consideration. Is the desecration of our countryside worth it for such small returns?

## WATER CONSERVATION

By Frank Thomas

Our most precious resource, its availability and condition is a priority for both individuals and our Government - witness the 2003 Water Act.

Recently the Environment Agency initiated consultations on the subject of water abstraction in each of the 8 water catchment regions in England and Wales. My initial response generated a response indicating how the Catchment Abstraction Management System (CAMS) would be changing the

way water abstraction licenses and controls will be managed in the future. Licences for water will now be "time limited", and small abstractors (<20m<sup>3</sup>/day) will be registered, but no longer licensed. Water quantity, condition, quality and the effect of seasonal changes will be recorded, and individual rights protected. There will be an increased focus on water conservation and water companies will be required to develop and publish water

resource management and drought plans. Damage to the environment could result in loss of a licence to abstract water.

The CAMS programme will run on a rolling 6-year basis and will result in reduction of extraction areas from 129 to 101 by 2014, together with a number of boundary changes, mainly by integrating on a watershed rather than a geographical or ownership basis.

# CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW

by Stuart Byfield

We held our AGM at Attenborough Nature Reserve in May and Valerie Gillespie kindly chaired it at short notice. Norman Lewis, a founder member of the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, gave a fascinating presentation on 'The Changing Nottinghamshire Landscape'. John Washbrook and Barbara Walker joined the Executive and we welcome them. Mary Mackie was elected as an Honorary Vice President.

In February we held an enjoyable lunch at the Harley Gallery after which Derek Adlam gave a most informative insight into the history of Welbeck Abbey and future plans for the estate. Promotional displays were mounted at Newark & Notts. Show, Newstead Abbey and Southwell Ploughing Match, and a delightful picnic took place at Cropwell Court. A most interesting, fund-raising lecture was given by Robert Macfarlane on "Wild Places" in Southwell Minster Great Hall.

As part of the National Greenbelt Campaign, we hosted a Seminar in March at County Hall to raise the profile of the Green Belts, as they are now under more threat from development than ever. The Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Joint Structure Plan says that the Nottingham/Derby Greenbelt has to be reviewed. In an effort to influence these reviews CPRE are promoting a campaign to illustrate the benefits of the Greenbelt to the planning system and the countryside. The seminar was well attended and received favourable comments from a large number of the delegates who attended. A follow-up meeting took place between representatives of the Branch and the officers of Nottingham and Derby who are putting the review together.

Members of the Executive have been interviewed six times this year and last on radio and television about various aspects of CPRE's work, and an encouraging article appeared in the Bramley newspaper.

I should like to thank all the members of the Branch Executive Committee for the hard work that they have put in, involving considerable time and effort behind the scenes. In particular I wish to mention my Vice-Chairmen, Rosamund and Leslie, for the effort that they have put into the functions we have held during the last year, and Mary Ball for putting together the Annual Review.

## REGIONAL NEWS

By Peter Holland and Mary Mackie

The CPRE East Midlands Regional Group (EMRG) holds quarterly meetings attended by representatives from branches in Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and South Yorkshire. These meetings provide an opportunity for exchange of news across the regions, discussion of local matters that may have a wider impact, and a look at initiatives for joint action.

The Regional Policy Officers Bettina Lange and Peter Winstanley make regular presentations on all kinds of planning policies and produce formal responses to Government consultation procedures. Bettina recently with respect to transport issues, the Rural Development Framework and the Rural Action Plan, which highlights issues such as the lack of affordable housing, loss of skills, importance of local foods, and landscape tranquillity. Peter meanwhile has been very involved in the regional planning policies, the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) expected in September, and the Sub-Regional Strategies for the Three Cities and Northern areas. There is considerable concern about the lack of reliable information regarding employment land and affordable housing. Questions arise concerning the housing projection figures and the implications this will have for the

transport infrastructure and other services and facilities, such as water supply and management. Currently the Sub-regional strategies do not appear to be consistent in their approach. Current timescales do not allow for a thorough Sustainability Appraisal or Strategic Environmental Assessment to properly inform the RSS concerning the importance of the landscape in possible developments in the Green Belt or green wedges. EMRG has built up a strong monitoring presence and influence in the policy area of Transport of all kinds over the year. The rapid growth in air travel has been evident both at Nottingham EM Airport and Robin Hood Airport near Doncaster, which has processed over one million passengers in the first year. CPRE argues that air travel is growing faster than economic growth. It is regarded as an important issue because high levels of aircraft noise, particularly overhead, seriously erodes quality of life, and travel to and from airports seriously impacts on rural infrastructure.

The region continues to support the Night Blight campaign against light pollution. Whilst planning regulations may well control major development, it appears that the basic cause of light pollution is small-scale security lighting which does not require permission. England is reportedly more brightly lit than any other European country apart from the Netherlands.

In July Tony Kemmer took over from Brian Montgomery as Regional

Chairman. Brian's work has been much appreciated over the last 4 years and he is to continue as East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum and Market Towns representative. Tony lives at Keyworth and is keen to work closely with all the branches in the region. Tony enjoyed a distinguished 30-year career with Boots. He is now in his third year of a University course at the School of Oriental and African studies, at the same time writing a book on Management, as well as being Vice-Chairman of Keyworth PC. Tony has always been interested in environmental issues and was drawn to CPRE with its' long campaigning history and its' well respected integrity. He brings to CPRE a wide range of skills including strategy, IT and corporate change management.

The Branch very much appreciates all the work done at the regional level as there is no way we could cover this without the help and expertise of the other branches in the region and the invaluable skills of our regional policy officers.

## Ashfield and Gedling District Groups

In April and May 2006, Ashfield and Gedling councils issued their first major step in the creation of their new Local Development Frameworks, namely their Core Strategies. The consultation consisted of a series of questions, some of which were similar to both districts, others being district-specific. Overall we felt that both councils

needed to place a greater emphasis on the sequential approach to development and protecting our environment, heritage and biodiversity. In addition, we felt that Gedling borough's strategy needed a greater emphasis on sustainability. The Gedling consultation also asked whether we felt it appropriate that the borough earmarked land as white land (i.e. land taken out of the green belt, that will not be built on until a subsequent plan period). In light of guidance from the Structure Plan that says that this is not necessary, and the fact that Gedling is currently the only authority in Greater Nottingham to have white land in their existing local plan, we commented that this would be inappropriate.

Alan Johnson

### Newark & Sherwood CPRE District Group

The Planning Sub-Group meets regularly to discuss major planning applications, decide responses to



*Valerie Gillespie emphasises a point!*

consultation documents, agree the submission of evidence to Planning Inquiries and review local, regional and national planning issues. We have been involved in the production of the 2nd Community Plan through membership of the Issues Groups, and continue to take an active role in the N&Sh Local Development Framework (LDF) process, including submitting detailed comments on the LDF Sustainability Appraisal.

We monitor the weekly N&Sh Planning Lists and comment where appropriate. We objected to a number of planning applications for residential development on greenfield sites, which were subsequently refused permission by the District Council, including proposals for 69 dwellings on British Waterways land off Millgate, Newark,

12 off Fiskerton Road, Southwell and 14 at Elm Farm, Bathley. Grounds for refusal by the Council included the current oversupply of houses in the District and the number of brownfield sites available. We objected strongly to a major application to construct 58 holiday lodges in woodland at Rufford Golf Centre, adjacent to Rufford Abbey and Country Park. The proposal will now be the subject of a Public Inquiry.

At present the Group is deeply concerned by 2 major wind farm schemes proposed at Lyndhurst, south of Mansfield, and Stoney Hill near Eakring. Apart from the immediate visual and environmental effects these would have on two areas of very attractive open countryside, permission for development could open the county to many more applications. We are also concerned by the environmental consequences of the County Council's decision to close the Fiskerton Household Waste and Re-cycling Centre near Southwell, at present under review following local pressure. During the year we have continued to promote CPRE by giving

talks, replying to requests for advice and information on planning matters and supporting local initiatives such as the Friends of Southwell Trail.

Valerie Gillespie

### RUSHCLIFFE DISTRICT GROUP

(Jan-August 2006)

Early in 2006 the Inspector finally reported on the Local Plan Review. Much of his Report was welcomed by CPRE; in particular he supported the changes we, jointly with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, had fought for to improve the policies protecting SSSIs and SINCs. He also approved the inclusion of a recommendation that surfacing and signage of rural routes should be appropriate to the countryside. However, by far the most controversial part of the Report was the Inspector's recommendation that the allocation for

housing of land at Edwalton, close to Sharpill Wood, should be deleted and that the Borough Council should reconsider the options for allocating the 1,200 dwellings elsewhere in the Borough. The Borough Council decided not to accept the Inspector's recommendation on this site and to retain the allocation, but a very vociferous campaign by the residents of Edwalton and their representatives was eventually successful in forcing the Council to change its decision. During the course of these arguments the Steering Group held a meeting specifically to discuss its position on the Edwalton allocation. Throughout the Local Plan Review process we had argued hard and consistently to keep the housing numbers as low as possible and had been delighted when the original allocation of 14,400 dwellings (allocated under the old Structure Plan) was reduced to 5,600 under the new Joint Structure Plan. Considering all the sites which had been allocated under the higher number, we felt that the retention of the Edwalton site rather than any of the sites further from Nottingham offered the most sustainable and least damaging solution, so we did not object to it. Throughout the Public Inquiry, when developers were arguing that the housing allocation for the Borough should be increased, we confined our efforts to refuting these arguments (subsequently refuted by the Inspector), rather than getting involved in disputes about sites. However, by the time of the Inspector's Report and the Borough Council's response we were very aware of the imminent review of the Green Belt around Nottingham and Derby, and of the Inspector's argument that the Edwalton site should not be removed from the Green Belt in advance of that review. We eventually agreed not to comment on this issue.

The unfortunate consequence of the de-allocation of the Edwalton site is that the process of adopting the new Local Plan cannot now go ahead and it remains to be seen whether the Borough Council will decide to progress the Plan with amended housing allocations or, perhaps more likely, to abandon it and move directly to the new system of a Local Development Framework. Either way, Rushcliffe is left in an uncertain and unsatisfactory position as regards dealing with development proposals in the interim.

Carol Collins

# GRANTHAM CANAL

by Carol Collins

CPRE, along with English Nature, the Environment Agency, the Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trusts, and British Waterways, has been represented on the Environmental Sub-Committee of the Grantham Canal Partnership since the Committee's formation in June 2005. From the beginning we were agreed that the task of the Committee was to ensure that future management of the Canal should protect, and where possible enhance, the existing wildlife, as well as the Canal's rural character. We accepted that the main aim of the Partnership is to restore the waterway to full navigation, and that this would inevitably be a major change that would conflict to some extent with protection of existing wildlife habitats. The sensible way forward seemed to us to be the commissioning of an ecological survey of the Canal as it exists at present, with a brief to make recommendations about the probable effects of opening it up to boats. The fieldwork stage of this survey began in late summer.

It is likely that some stretches will prove to be more sensitive to disturbance than others and that recommendations about what levels of boat traffic would be acceptable will differ from section to section. We hope that the consultants will be able to suggest measures which might be taken to mitigate any losses, perhaps through the creation of new wetland habitat alongside the existing channel. By assessing the whole length of the Canal now we hope to be as prepared as possible to make an objective assessment of any proposal to restore either part of all the waterway. Meanwhile, the Executive Committee of the Partnership continues to try to find funding for restoration, in particular for the joining of the Canal to the Trent, but has not so far been successful.

# TRANQUILLITY

by Mary Ball

CPRE "exists to promote the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of rural England..." What do we mean by "tranquillity"? The word itself appears in a great many policy and planning documents, especially those which promote places for tourism and inward investment. It is clear that whatever tranquillity is, and wherever it is to be found, it is important and judged to be worth protecting. Despite psychological research highlighting the importance of tranquillity, it remains a relatively poorly understood concept. It runs the risk of being overlooked.

National Office ran a "Hunt for Hush" campaign last summer. Seventy-five places were noted which met the criteria of having a period of 10 minutes with no interruptions from intrusive noises from 7 am to 7 pm: no road traffic, off-road vehicles, aircraft, industry, amplified noise or explosions. 47% were in National

Parks or AONBs; 25% in Scotland or Wales; and 21% in the 'non-protected' areas of rural England.

National Office and the Countryside Agency commissioned a research project with the Universities of Newcastle and Northumbria, aiming to find a way of "mapping" tranquillity and the findings were published earlier this year: "Mapping Tranquillity: defining and assessing a valuable resource". A project to map tranquillity across England is being launched on 25th October. Once we have a method of measuring tranquillity, we shall be in a better position to protect it, and the results should become an important tool in planning and conservation.

It is likely that we will need volunteers from the Branch to help map the tranquil areas of the County. If you are interested in becoming involved (and we do need you!) please contact me or your own District Group

## HAIKU

Bee hum drowns traffic  
Starlight outshines urban flare  
Tranquillity reigns

Rosamund

# FARMING TODAY

by Frank Thomas

Recognising the importance of the recently introduced "Single Payment" scheme, which rewards care of the land rather than production, CPRE and the NFU recently completed a joint study into the expenditure on the environment by the average farm. The report "Living Landscapes" found that around £2,500 is spent by farmers in maintaining the structure and appearance of the landscape each year. Concerns were expressed by both bodies that projected cuts in EC funding allocations to environmental schemes could lead to neglect of our beautiful countryside.

"There's no such thing as a free hedge." "Right-on", thinks your correspondent (bending to the task of uprooting the rampant ragwort generously donated by the local Highways Authority), "I need to get those young tree plantings watered again today!" A farmer's work is definitely never done!

## MEMBERSHIP OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CPRE

Branch membership stood at 413 on 30.6.06, which is an increase of only 2 over the past year. However, despite an inevitable natural decline (14 since 30.6.05), members recruited since January 2006 are 16 (3.8%). Nationally, membership is 60,019, a decrease of 0.7% from the previous year but membership has increased by 1014 (1.7%) since 1.1.06. The largest district group membership is Newark and Sherwood, with 123 members. The largest branch Kent has 2088 members and the smallest Rutland has 113. It is a constant effort to keep up our numbers, and we are winning - just! Can we appeal to you as a supporter of CPRE, to persuade your friends and acquaintances to join, or if you are running an event where our local membership leaflets could be on display, perhaps you could obtain some from Ruth Robinson (01636-813122). We are advertising for a voluntary Recruitment and Publicity Officer (expenses paid). If you know of anyone who may be interested, please let us know. Ros Tomlinson

# BENTINCK TIP & VOID

by John Washbrook

In the Ashfield Group we recently received a "flyer" from the Waste Recycling Group for the proposed development of the tip, a fairly conventional colliery tip, and the void, which is the result of open cast works. The developer has arranged for 2 consultation days at Selston and Annesley Woodhouse prior to submitting a revised Planning Application for the site. By the time you read this our group chairman John Kerry and I will have attended one of the consultation days.

The restoration of the tip and void will involve the use of the void as a landfill site for about 10 years, with comprehensive landscaping when the site has been filled to the agreed capacity. The use of the site for landfill has generated a considerable amount of opposition in the Ashfield area and beyond. This site is plagued by all sorts of difficulties, which can be summed up as follows:

1) It is on one of the highest points in Nottinghamshire and from my own experience the wind never stops blowing. Consequently we believe there will be the possibility of unacceptable amounts of airborne and atmospheric pollution. The proposal to compost imported organic waste to this site also raises questions.

2) It will be accessed from M1 Junction 27 via a new road off the existing roundabout to the Sherwood Business Park. Do we really need more traffic on what is probably the busiest section of the M1? The new road will be built across agricultural land. This area has recovered from the effects of the road transport of coal; do we now want to see similar sized vehicles delivering waste to this area?

3) As well as being near the M1 it is close to several inhabited areas and these proposals could have a negative effect on the environment.

4) From my past professional knowledge I know that watercourses and waste tips are not happy partners, both in relation to the stability of the tip and the migration of pollutants and leachate from the fill material. The Cuttall Brook passes through the site.

5) North Nottinghamshire is known for its aquifers in the Sherwood sandstones, making this area significantly less liable to the problems of drought. Will these proposals pose a significant risk to these aquifers?

6) Geologic difficulties and the discovery by John Kerry in colliery records of several buried and potentially unstable slurry lagoons

mean that the development of the site prior to landfill will not be straightforward.

7) The Local Waste Plan is 3 years out of date, so any application will be to a Plan that is probably invalid. Consequently will the Local Authority be able to make a proper determination of a developer's application?

8) Do we know what the waste needs will be in this community in the coming years? From my professional experience I know that planning even 1 year ahead is fraught with difficulties. We don't know how the population will expand (or contract) in the future? Will we need landfill when there is ever increasing pressure to recycle? Will future fuel costs make the transportation of waste uneconomic? What will happen should the proposals become uneconomic or the developer go bust; who'll pick up the pieces?

9) How will this site dovetail with other existing and proposed waste management sites/facilities in the area?

We need to ask two questions to start with - is the site needed at all and is this really the right place for it?

## RAISING OUR PROFILE AT OUTSIDE EVENTS

In May we had our usual stand at the Newark & Notts Show. Despite the cool weather, we met many people and handed out hundreds of leaflets. Of particular interest was the Green Belt display which was of concern to many visitors. In June Stuart Byfield and Sandra Ford brought CPRE to the attention of a new audience at the Springwatch event in Newstead Abbey and in September we shall again be at Southwell Ploughing Match. Thank you to all those 'willing' helpers who support us. We could not do this without your help.

Ruth Robinson

## HARRY JOHNSON AWARD

The Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust and CPRE jointly arrange this award to recognise and acknowledge the best restoration of an old building or the best new building within a village setting.

The award was given annually, but the decision was taken in 2004 to move to a bi-annual format as applications had reduced since the Award's inception in 1989. It is proposed to make an award later this year. Parish Councils and individuals have put forward many buildings in the past and new

entrants can be put forward at any time for consideration.

Previous winners have included a renovated cottage at Sutton Bonnington, a Museum at Flintham, a Medical Centre at East Bridgford, a Veterinary Practice at Bingham and a Village Store in Colston Basset.

Full details of how to apply will be sent to you on application to the NBPT at 2, Priory Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5HU (Tel: 0115-9819622).

Councillor Maureen Stockwood

# ARE THERE STILL WILD PLACES LEFT IN ENGLAND?

by Leslie Teasdale

In March Nottinghamshire CPRE arranged a lecture given by Robert Macfarlane in the Great Hall of Southwell Minster, a most attractive venue. Tickets were sold out by the end of January thanks to a saturated advertising campaign.

Robert dealt with the topic of Wildernesses in the British 'archipelago'. This, in itself, showed Robert's originality. We rarely, if ever, think of the British Isles as forming an 'archipelago'. Robert conceded that there is confusion between Wilderness and Wildness when the latter term is used to describe wild-life fauna and flora. He offered a definition of Wilderness that incorporates the human reaction to the wonders of a natural world which have not been brought about by human intervention. He recognised, however, that in such a heavily populated area as these islands, there is little left that has not been influenced by mankind. Nevertheless, he offered examples of territory where otherwise man-made landscapes and cultivated land have left

small areas of the terrain virtually untouched for millennia. He argued that many field-separating features such as stream valleys fit this description.

The audience encompassed a wide age-range and there were many challenging questions and contributions in the discussion arising from Robert's ideas. Not only did they question how much of England can really be said to be Wilderness, but one speaker even suggested that only the freely mobile and fully fit should be encouraged to explore Wilderness, in order to preserve it from damage from too many provisions for the less

nimble!

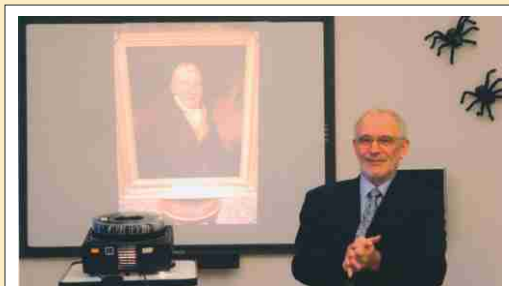
We are most grateful to Robert for giving his time and thoughts free of charge and we made a handsome profit. You may be tempted to buy his book "Wild Places" which will be published by Granta next year.



*Our Chairman introduces Robert Macfarlane*

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

by Rosamund Macfarlane



*Norman Lewis and Spiders in the company of Robert Lowe, who performed the first agricultural survey of Nottinghamshire.*

Ruth Robinson arranged this at Attenborough Nature Reserve - an excellent choice of venue. Despite being the end of May, it was a chilly evening, but 16 members well booted and cloaked walked with Keith, who gave us a brief history of the 240-acre

site - which had involved flooding of quarries and removal of bunds to form shallow waters, small islands and reed beds. We saw greater crested grebes, graylag geese and tufted ducks, and the surface of the water was alive with sandmartins, swallows and swifts.

Our Vice-President Valerie Gillespie, presided over the meeting which was attended by 31 members, and gave a tribute to our past President Myles Hildyard, an enthusiastic defender of the countryside and a true original. Our society shows a healthy profit this year thanks to fundraising, grants and donations, and we have maintained our level of membership. Our profile was raised considerably by the Green Belt conference held at County Hall.

Norman Lewis gave us an excellent talk about Nottinghamshire's changing

landscape, depending on the underlying geology of sandstone, coal, magnesium limestone (such as Cresswell Crags), the copper marles, glacial hills and washlands. He spoke of the death of elm trees, the re-creation of Sherwood Forest, the improving of conifer plantations by the Forestry Commission and the restoration of Nottingham's heathland on Rufford tip. Bigger machinery has led to bigger fields and modern crops such as borage for essential oils, leeks and carrots after the appearance of the countryside. Gravel extraction has created quarries and lakes. Gypsum has exploited our minerals. Finally he spoke of the effects of climate change - the probability of wind turbines and nuclear power stations in our landscape, and if water rises by a few feet, the effects on the flood plains.

## LUNCH IN THE GALLERY

by Rosamund Macfarlane

In February over 20 CPRE members assembled at the Harley Gallery in Welbeck Abbey Estate near Worksop, for a pleasant sociable lunch. (Only our chairman got lost on the way there!) Relaxed and well fed, we stood under the arches of the gallery - a building restored by local trade people from the old gasworks to a design by the architect Leo Godlewski, a modern echo of an industrial past, while Derek Adlam, curator, gave us the history of the Burrowing Duke of Portland, who will be remembered for his prodigious underground building of 2 ½ miles of underground drives and a ¼-acre ballroom from 1860-79. He led an odd life: he never entertained and seldom saw anyone, but corresponded widely. He may have had psoriatic arthritis, which would explain his reluctance to appear in public. In 1988 the Harley Arts Foundation was established, and an arts and crafts workshop in the 5th Duke's kitchen gardens was started. Today the estate is looking to the future and there are many exciting new ventures to utilise the old buildings. The Gallery and Treasures are well worth a visit, and the lunch is good too!



*Harley Gallery Treasure Trove*

# NOTTINGHAMSHIRE VILLAGE COMMUNITIES

by Rosamund Macfarlane

Four new champions of the Best Kept Village competition appear this year in the largest to smallest population categories: Misterton, Shireoaks, Everton and Plumtree, with Misterton as Best New Entrant. Jacksdale has been nominated for the Calor "Village of the Year" Competition. Once again Valerie Gillespie and her team judged this event - a considerable workload: they commented, "these villages have been a delight to visit". We thank Wilkinsons for their generous prize money.

As an add-on to the BKV competition, Defra and Calor have sponsored the "Building Community Life" Competition, where aspirants fill out a questionnaire about how successfully their village operates as an active and caring community. Judged by members of the BKV team, and led by Valerie, Caunton were the winners, with Misterton second and Aslockton third. We do congratulate all the winners and runners-up in these competitions, who work so hard to make their villages thriving and attractive communities, and espouse aims very much at the heart of CPRE.



L- Right: Ruth Robinson, Sue & Tony Kemmer, Stuart Byfield, Sir Andrew & Lady Buchanan and Mary Mackie at the picnic.

Michael and Ann Rowen kindly agreed we could hold our annual picnic in their beautiful garden at Cropwell Court this year. The weather had been

dry and hot for weeks, but the garden looked lovely and their vegetable garden was the envy of all! They made us most welcome and had very kindly put out several tables with umbrellas and chairs and these were soon gratefully occupied by 63 members and friends, serving as protection against a sprinkling of rain as well as hot sun during the day. The plant and produce stall made a record £130, selling plants, chutneys, jams, soft fruit

## SUMMER PICNIC

by Ruth Robinson

and fudge. Our thanks to all those who contributed. The Rowens kindly provided several trays of purple basil which were very popular. It was good that our President Sir Andrew Buchanan and his wife Belinda, Tony Kemmer (our new East Midlands Chairman) and his wife Sue, and Peter Winstanley (our Regional Policy Officer) and Lyn, were all able to be there.

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## From the Editor

Firstly, may I thank all the contributors for their fluent prose - I hope you will all enjoy reading their varied articles and learn a little more about what our branch has been up to in the past year. Secondly, may I draw your attention to the article about membership - you could really help by bringing a friend to an event next year or encouraging them to join CPRE. Thirdly, please consider contributing a few words to the next newsletter, or our website (put Notts CPRE into your search engine). Copy can be sent to the Chairman or Secretary. Please be assured that the committee is always open to suggestions for campaigns or events - there is a list of contacts below.

Thank you.  
Rosamund Macfarlane

## OBITUARIES

We are very sad to tell you of the death of Jill Teasdale, wife of our Vice Chairman Leslie, and known to many of the members. She provided essential support for Lesley in his conscientious work for Nottinghamshire CPRE and was active at many of our events. She was a lovely lady and will be much missed by all who knew her. The Byfields, Rosamund Macfarlane and the Gillespies were at her funeral in Lowdham.

In August the Branch learnt that Roger Chandler, our regional Treasurer, had

died. Carol Collins, the Gillespies, Peter Winstanley (RPO), Keith Wallace (Derbyshire), David Edsall (Northamptonshire) and Fiona Cowan (Press & Publicity) were just a few of the regional group who went to Roger's very moving thanksgiving service held in Oakham on 18 August 2006. Roger had been Treasurer for many years. Never one to mince his words if he felt CPRE need to make its voice heard, Roger will be sorely missed and we are grateful for his care of the region's finances.

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