

9 May 2017

“Once it’s gone, it’s gone!” How can local people influence the planning system to ensure good development?

A CPRE Buckinghamshire event, designed to inform local people about how they can influence the planning system and help protect the Bucks countryside, attracted 50 local parish and town councillors on Saturday 6 May [1].

The Rt Hon Cheryl Gillan PC, President of CPRE Bucks, opened the inaugural planning roadshow for parish and town councils. Cheryl said “Once it’s gone, its gone”, and went on to highlight the importance of protecting our landscape from damage, as the rural environment is necessary to support the urban environment. Titled ‘Bringing the Planning System Back Home’, the event focused on how local people can best influence planning matters in Buckinghamshire.

Cheryl highlighted the national importance of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as the nearest AONB for millions of Londoners to enjoy the beauty of nature. CPRE has launched a General Election Manifesto - Stand up for the countryside [2]. Cheryl urged local people to ask their candidates of whatever political persuasion to sign up to this manifesto.

Attendees heard from Peter Lerner, an experienced town planner, about the recently published Housing White Paper and its influence on local planning policy. Dr Geoff Botting from Woodcote Parish Council in Oxfordshire shared his experience of leading the production of the Woodcote Neighbourhood Development Plan and how this has resulted in a plan for the future which is sustainable and acceptable to the local community. His message to others: “You can do it!”

“This was an excellent short conference that made important connections between parish neighbourhood planning, local plans and central government policy” said one participant, Cllr Jon Harvey, Buckingham Town Mayor. “Parish and Town Councillors have a huge role to play in working with local people to nurture places and spaces in which we can all shape and achieve our ambitions.”

You can find out more and get useful planning resources from our website at www.cprebucks.org.uk

End

Notes to editors:

[1] CPRE campaigns for a beautiful and living countryside, working to protect, promote and enhance our towns and countryside to make them better places to live, work and enjoy. It acts to ensure the countryside is protected for now and future generations. CPRE has a branch in every English county, over 200 district groups and over 2,000 member parish councils. It is the country’s main third party participant in the planning system. CPRE believes that good land-use planning is essential for facilitating the development we need in the right locations while protecting the environment. Founded in 1926, President: Emma Bridgewater, Patron: Her Majesty The Queen. CPRE Bucks is registered as a charity (No. 1163356) and company (No. 9186100) in England. For more information, see www.cprebucks.org.uk.

[2] *Stand up for the countryside*, CPRE’s manifesto for the 2017 General Election
<http://www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/sound-bites/item/4583-cpre-publishes-manifesto-for-2017-general-election>

Contact: For further information contact Louise Hartley, Branch Manager, on 01844 348829 or at louise@cprebucks.org.uk.