

# **CPRE London Annual Review**

2010

2011

# Annual Report 2011

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The 2011 AGM will take place on

**Tuesday October 25 at 6.30pm**

The Gallery 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ

Following the meeting there will be a talk:

***Greening the Green Belt***

**By Dr Nicholas Falk**

Founder and Director of Urbed (Urban & Economic Development)

Light refreshments and drinks will be served

## **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman's Review can be a rather bland offering, but on this occasion I hope to sound really upbeat and cheerful, in spite of being told that I must be brief and confine myself to a couple of paragraphs.

I am very pleased to be able to say that after nearly 18 months without a director the Branch is at last emerging into the light of day. Without the wonderful support of Hanna Crafer, John Turtle and Patricia Cordell I don't think we would be here this evening, they have kept the ship afloat when at times it felt that it would be difficult to keep going. Now however the Branch has appointed a new director, Edward Dawson, who has experience of working with CPRE, most recently as director of the South East Region. I have known Edward for many years and I am delighted he has been able to join us.

The thrust of the Branch's work now, in liaison with the surrounding CPRE branches, will be directed towards the protection and enhancement of the Green Belt and other open space in the Metropolitan area. In addition to that we will continue work on the vital area of compact communities and the development of good family housing in the urban context. As you know we have awarded a bursary to assist Abigail Batchelor in her post graduate research study into urban development. When completed we hope to publish a joint CPRE/LSE critique of the Elephant and Castle redevelopment, with regard to how well it meets our demanding criteria.

This is how we hope now to move forward, much will depend on whether the City Bridge Trust will assist the Branch in funding these projects, that is the next hurdle to be crossed, but I am confident it can be achieved.

## Director's Report

This report covers the period January-December 2010, and is presented at the CPRE London AGM on 25 October 2011. The Treasurer's Report covers the same period. 2010 was a further year of the economic recession. The housing market continued to slump. The effects in the London area were strongly felt, though less than in other regions. The regional economy had overheated and there was a mismatch between housing and jobs.

In the meantime, the government sees the regions as a means of promoting the economy. In London, the aim is to retain its fundamental strengths, despite the loss of confidence and reduced business activity. CPRE appeared at the London Plan examination. The Mayor of London is responsible for producing eight strategies, one of which, the Spatial Development Strategy, provides the development framework for London. Future housing capacity and its distribution among the Boroughs will form a central part of the Spatial Development Strategy. The findings of the housing capacity study are also important for the London Housing Strategy, in helping to investigate areas and levels of future investment. We will continue to work towards considering whether the Plan is sound for the future of the city.

### *Be our 'eyes and ears'*

CPRE London would like to create an 'eyes and ears' network. This is not a formal arrangement, just a way of feeding back ideas and responses from your local area. We will be arranging meetings of local group reps and others next year. We will also consider training sessions on local planning.

We would like to recruit a local groups co-ordinator to support and advise groups. Please contact the Director if you can help.

## Membership Changes

From this November, London Branch is to be responsible for recruiting its own members. This brings new challenges, and given the size and complexity of London and our priorities it is essential we get more members, and hence income. Please gently suggest to friends and neighbours they too should support our work to campaign on issues that affect both London and the wider English countryside, and join. There is much to do, and we look forward to a busy year with continuing debates on the National Planning Policy Framework and the Localism Bill. As a Branch, we then have to work to maximise our impact within the new challenges and opportunities both bring. If you would like to help in any way please contact CPRE London office (020 7253 0300) or e-mail [office@cprelondon.org.uk](mailto:office@cprelondon.org.uk)

Look out too for the range of interesting speakers and events we are lining up for the coming year. They will normally be held in the Gallery at 70 Cowcross Street, close to Farringdon Station (Metropolitan, Hammersmith and City, and Circle Lines and First Capital Connect).

We are working now developing and refreshing our web site, and hope soon to join Twitter and Facebook so it will be easier for members to make their opinions known on planning and environmental issues.

### 2010 Branch Appeal

Our thanks go to everyone who contributed generously to our last Branch Appeal. In 2010 the appeal raised £841, the year before members gave a grand total of £2791.

You should receive a separate letter inviting you to donate for 2011. We hope you will give generously to support the student bursary initiative and the extra costs involved in once again having an expert, experienced, salaried Director.

If we are to be effective in these difficult times we must increase our income to make sure we can fight effectively to support London's open spaces, Green Belt, and decent well designed brownfield developments of communities Londoners want to live in.

## CPRE London

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 December 2010

	2010	2009
<b>Receipts</b>	£	£
Membership (Branch)	20,089	20,869
Membership (Region)	7,615	7,761
Regional Support Grant	3,800	3,330
Branch Appeal Proceeds	3,632	-
Donations	1,311	1,227
Bank Interest - Branch Deposit Account	20	45
Bank Interest - Regional Account	15	6
Miscellaneous	75	60
	<b>36,557</b>	<b>33,298</b>
<b>Payments</b>	£	£
Employment costs - Director	5,890	26,999
Employment costs - Admin. Assistant	4,305	-
Office rental	5,745	9,347
Office Expenses	1,562	579
Postage	524	1,032
Telephone and Internet Access	879	659
Printing & Photocopying	2,074	1,844
Hospitality inc. AGM	88	334
Insurance	494	533
Travel and Subsistence	56	347
Subscriptions and Publications	42	188
Legal and Professional Services	-	-
Bank charges	27	20
Events	-	575
Miscellaneous	100	-
	<b>21,786</b>	<b>42,457</b>
Net Income	£ 14,771	-£ 9,159
Bank balances at previous year end	£ 34,673	£ 43,832
<b>Bank balances at this year end</b>	<b>£ 49,444</b>	<b>£ 34,673</b>

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## Treasurer's Report 2010

Our 2010 expenditure was £21,786 with an income of £36,556. The overall income was very similar to that of 2009, especially if you take into account the fact that the proceeds from the branch appeal for both 2009 and 2010 were received in 2010. The 2010 outgoings were greatly reduced from those of 2009 due to there being no Director in post within the branch.

Once again we would like to thank David Tillett for volunteering his time and experience to act as our Independent Examiner.

## Green Belt

In the London area, the Metropolitan Green Belt is one of the most important and effective planning tools we have. For over 50 years, Green Belts have been a protective element for open land around cities. They have stopped cities sprawling into the surrounding countryside. They have also prevented urban areas merging together and losing their identity. They also strongly encourage urban regeneration and renewal. Now we see new possible threats to the policy itself.

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) appears to give far less protection to London's Green Belt than PPG2, the current guidance. It is not just the fewer number of words - just over a thousand instead of some seven thousand - but the possibility of misinterpretation is greater. A clear example is the omission of "...essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation...", "small changing rooms or unobtrusive spectator accommodation...or small stables..." (PPG2 3.5). The guidance on Green Belts may have needed updating, but much more thought and discussion is needed if the Government's assertion of protection is to be assured. The presumption in favour of 'sustainable development' could be argued to clash with the genuine protection of the Green Belt. In London we are also concerned about Metropolitan Open Land, sports fields, allotments and farmland which may not be protected, and the threat to the development of compact sustainable communities close to public transport and jobs on urban brownfield sites by the ease of building on green countryside. CPRE London is supporting CPRE nationally in urging a rethink and redrafting of this controversial major upheaval to planning policy.

We opposed a significant potential threat to London's Green Belt at Copthall, Mill Hill, NW7, where Premier rugby club Saracens wish to enlarge a small community stadium to a capacity of 10,000, with a major new stand including shops, offices and a large hospitality area which could be used for banqueting and other functions. New stands and other developments on site would be a major intrusion into the Green Belt. One worrying aspect is the effort and resources Saracens have put into trying to convince the local community to support their plans, including sending representatives door-to-door, publicity events in the main shopping street and at schools with leading players, and presentations in pubs around the borough of Barnet. The effort and expense put into the campaign appears to strike at the heart of the concept of localism, even though so far this seems to have been inconclusive. A previous attempt 13 years ago to develop a 10,000 seat football stadium and 1,000 seat athletics stadium on the same site failed after a public inquiry. A revised application by Saracens is expected to go for public consultation in the near future. We will be monitoring this - and other potential Green Belt threats closely.

<b>CPRE LONDON</b>	
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b> (at October 2011)	<b>Co-opted Members</b>
<b>Chairman</b> Donald Mitchell	John Stonborough Rodney FitzGerald Stephen Butters
<b>Honorary Secretary</b> Patricia Cordell	<b>Staff</b>
<b>Trustees</b> John Turtle John Archer	<i>Director</i> Edward Dawson  <i>Office Manager</i> Hanna Crafer
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