



The countryside charity  
Cornwall

## Cornwall **Matters** February 2024

### **CPRE Cornwall newsletter**

issue 9, February 2024

Welcome to our first newsletter of the new year. Let's hope 2024 will be a better year for the countryside and our communities, and will bring more effective actions to bear on the dire long term threats of Climate Change. Here in Cornwall, we are privileged to have a strong battalion of wildlife and ecology organisations and advocates who work collaboratively to protect and preserve the natural world. Our work on planning issues often parallels their agendas, especially when cases arise in farmland or protected landscapes. We wholeheartedly endorse and applaud their essential work.

The financial climate is hostile for all charities nowadays but nevertheless, we have to continue to stress that we depend on donations to be able to continue the important work we do on planning issues all over Cornwall.

If you are thinking of making a donation or setting one up by Direct Debit, please note that unless it is made specifically to **Cornwall CPRE, Sort Code 20-87-94, Account 10292745**, it will go to CPRE national office. Cheques can be sent directly to CPRE Cornwall, 8 Chyandour Square, Penzance. TR18 3LW. Please contact our administrator, [admin@cprecornwall.org](mailto:admin@cprecornwall.org), if you would like more information about this important point.

Our branch managed to attract a few new members last year but we really do need a whole lot more. May we remind you of **the 1 + 1 idea?** – if everyone attracted one new member each, that would help enormously.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March**, at **Healey's Cyder Farm** near Callestick. The meeting will be followed by a short talk by CPRE's Chief Executive **Roger Mortlock**, with time for questions afterwards. Full details will be e-mailed in early February (and posted to those whose e-mail addresses we do not have). We are delighted to be able to hold our event at Healey's: it is an outstanding example of a successful family enterprise. They produce cyder, all kinds of other apple products and wine; the farm is an attractive venue for visitors and locals alike, in a beautiful countryside setting a couple of miles off the A30 at Penhallow, northwest of Truro.

This February issue includes a piece on recent developments of genuinely affordable homes for local people, carried out by Community Interest Companies. The two we feature: one at Padstow and one in the South Hams in Devon, illustrate what can be done by local authorities if the will and the way can be found.

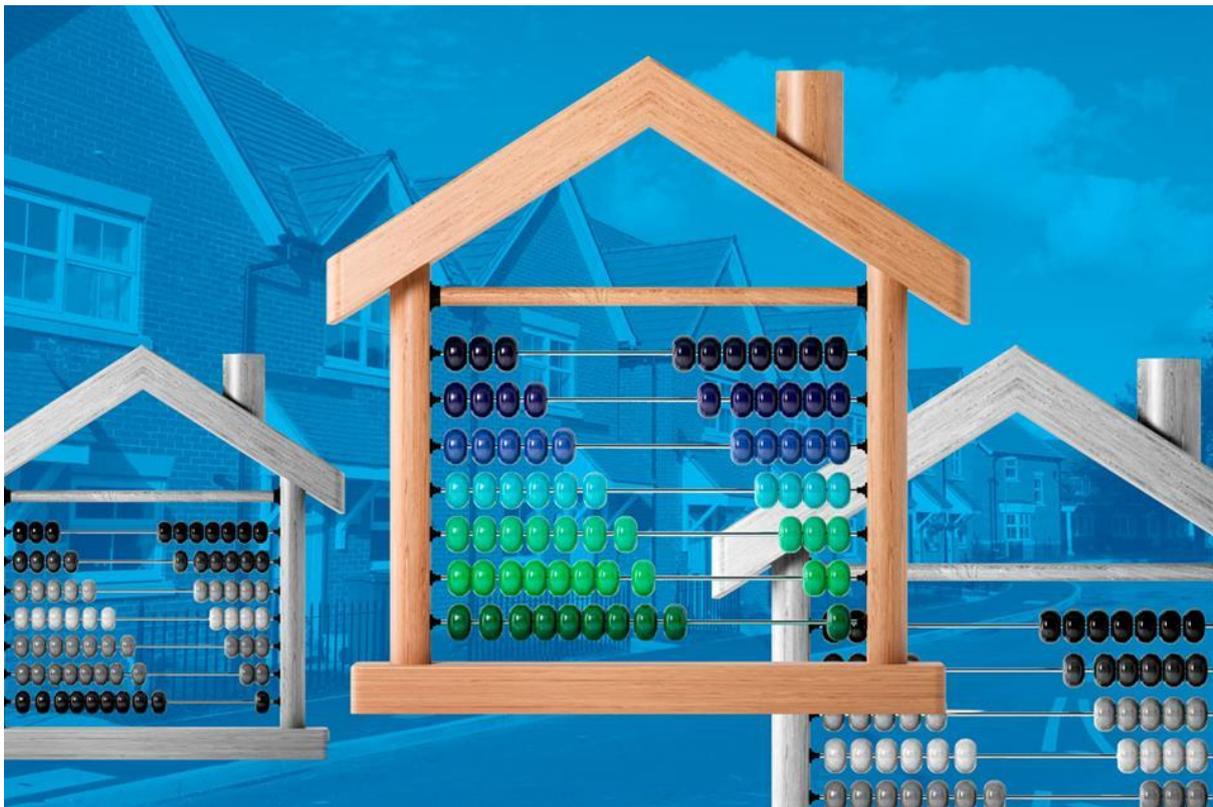
There is also a brief update on the national planning policy debate, following Michael Gove's Ministerial Statement last December. We await news of a final version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that will be debated later this year as part of the Government's revised Levelling Up and Regeneration bill.

Getting rooftop solar arrays made obligatory on all new builds as well as fitted wherever possible on existing sites – and especially on commercial buildings like warehouses, car parks and garages – is one of our most important current campaigns. New technology is being developed all the time to make the panels ever more discreet, powerful and cost-effective: **how much do YOU know about capturing solar energy?**

**Take our quiz and find out.**

♥ And a big THANK YOU, as always, for your support – we very much appreciate our members' ongoing commitment as we seek to protect rural Cornwall and support sustainable development to meet local needs.

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### **The National Planning Policy Framework – an on-going story**

In a Ministerial Statement on 19 December last year, Michael Gove shed more light on the new policy outline that is scheduled to be debated in Parliament later this year as part of the revised Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. Whether the Conservative Government get this legislation through before the expected general election, we do not know – and nor do we know what a Labour Government would put in its place. We must assume that at least some of the NPPF will be in operation through the next two to four years – and maybe longer. As it is of vital importance for long-term planning by local authorities, this is not a happy situation.

The Statement begins with 'This government is committed to building more homes, more quickly, more beautifully and more sustainably.' Local Authorities will be required to have an up-to-date 5-Year Plan with a deliverable 5-year supply of designated land and this Plan will 'ensure local authorities are in control of where and what development happens in their area.' There is virtually no mention of countryside issues apart from saying that the Framework '...strengthens protection for agricultural land'; it also '...emphasises the role of beauty and placemaking in the planning system.' We may, presumably, take that to mean characteristically Cornish places.

For CPRE the need for a national strategy framed for low-income rural areas is very important, as is the infrastructure provision that should support them: doctors, public transport, care services and provision for access to green spaces. An encouraging point is that ‘...the updated NPPF now emphasises the importance of community-led housing development’ and will encourage Local Planning Authorities to seek opportunities to support small sites for that purpose.

Further points to note include the following:

- Delivery of skills for Planning Officers – more training incentives to ‘up-skill’ the Planning Authority’s workforce
- Local Authorities held to account for delivery – monitoring the speed of processing applications and creating a national ‘league table’ of performance
- A new approach to nationally important infrastructure projects – overriding local opposition where necessary.
- Five principal codes for design and suitability, including sustainability.
- Local five-year plans, whether new or already in hand, must be submitted by 30 June 2025 and all housing development must be not only consistent with but led by the Local Plan.
- Local Authorities need a five-year rolling catalogue of land supply.
- There will be an emphasis on urban areas, suggesting an ‘uplift’ of 35% of the existing built up area.
- There will be more emphasis on protecting Green Belt land.

The last two are not relevant to Cornwall: it has no ‘green belt’ land at all. And finally, Mr Gove has commissioned a three-month review of the Statutory Consultation System – that, we in Cornwall are well aware, has so often overturned local decisions.



**St Ann’s Chapel, South Hams.** Photo credit: BBC News

### **Community-led Local Developments for affordable housing**

At present, Cornwall Council can draw upon a remaining pot of European funding to support small scale local development projects led by Community Interest Companies (CIC). The Council oversees a pipeline of eligible sites and monitors the planning process. There is a website: [Affordable Housing - Cornwall Council](#) with information on how to do it and a toolkit for local authorities with links to useful sources. The regional hub for community-led projects is Cornwall Community Land Trust, described as ‘...one of the most progressive and successful community land trusts in England.’ It is a member of the National Co-operative Housing Confederation. It’s current projects include schemes (all at various stages of the process) in Tintagel, St Endellion, St Just, St Keverne, Landewednack and the Isles of Scilly – to name just a few.

Usually, for a community-led scheme to happen, a local action group emerges to make the case for a specific local need and to find a possible site. Alternatively, a partnership between the planning authority and a developer can deliver a scheme specifically for people with a validated local connection.

In the summer of last year, a scheme at Padstow delivered the first 21 of an eventual 55 affordable homes. Named Treceus Farm, it is a ‘Council Housing’ development for eligible local people, by Cornwall Council in partnership with Poltair Homes, containing a mixture of houses, bungalows and flats, mostly for shared ownership and targeting first time buyers. Councillor Ollie Monk said ‘...our priority is to provide homes for local residents and this development has enabled us to work with a developer to provide [these] much-needed homes in an area where there is high demand.’ And, one might add, very high prices. The homes have energy efficient air source heat pumps and the facility for a charge point if required. Sadly, they do not have solar panels fitted as standard. Councillor Stephen Rushworth said ‘...This scheme is in a good, sustainable location: people can walk to the local school and to the shops. It is so important that we are providing homes like this for our community.’

In the South Hams in Devon, Transition Community Land Trust of Totnes has produced the St Anne’s Chapel scheme with eight affordable houses and bungalows for eligible local people, on a site made available by a philanthropic local landowner. They are built to an energy-saving specification, highly insulated with triple glazing, two parking spaces and access to green space close by. Councillors were quoted saying: ‘...this is the first time in a generation we have built our own affordable housing which will help tackle the District’s housing crisis.’ Councillor Julian Brazil said: ‘...we hope to take forward some of the valuable lessons learned from this project. Providing more housing for local people is one of our biggest priorities.’

While applauding these small-scale, locally generated schemes it should be pointed out that In Cornwall there are 20,000 households on the Housing Register. While one can be confident that in these small cases, ‘affordable’ is a reasonable adjective, there are three types of ‘affordable’: Social Rented housing (‘Council Housing’) at 50% or 60% of open market rents, Affordable Rented housing – owned, let and managed by a Registered Provider (i.e a Housing Association), and various Shared Ownership schemes. Affordable housing is also expected to be provided by what is called ‘S106’ –

a clause in the contract for a commercial developer to provide a certain portion of 'affordable' within a 'market price' scheme. The ways and means by which this clause is interpreted and complied with are legion – the most blatant, perhaps, being the case where the developer simply says, 'I will not make as much profit as I predicted at the outset so I am cutting out the affordables.'

In general, the admirable aspects of community-led developments are: firstly that the project comes from the grass roots and has local community support; second that it is acceptably in keeping with the locality – the core character of the place - and thirdly that local people who would otherwise be priced out of their home area have a chance to continue living there.



**How much do YOU know about capturing solar energy?**

**Take our quiz and find out.**

[Rooftop Solar Quiz - CPRE, the countryside charity](#)

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## Planning Update

### [PA21/01480 | Construction of a crematorium with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure | Land West Of The A39 Poundstock Bude Cornwall EX23 0DE](#)

On 19 December 2022, Cornwall Council granted planning permission to the Atlantic View Crematorium Consortium for the construction of a crematorium, with associated buildings, access, landscaping and infrastructure on land to the west of the A39 in the open countryside at Poundstock, within sight of the Atlantic Coast (PA21/01480). The proposed crematorium would be one of the largest in the country and it was a controversial proposal attracting hundreds of objections from residents questioning its viability, location and impact on residents and tourism in the area.

Two residents challenged Cornwall Council's decision in the High Court and following a Judicial Review, Sir Duncan Ouseley, High Court Judge, found in their favour and quashed the permission on 04/10/2023.

### [Watton v Cornwall Council \[2023\] EWHC 2436 \(Admin\) \(04 October 2023\) \(bailii.org\)](#)

The planning application was resubmitted to Cornwall Council and was refused on 12 January 2024.

The Refusal Notice included the following points:

It is not considered the information submitted and available to the Local Planning Authority has demonstrated a clear and convincing qualitative and quantitative need for the proposed crematorium.

Submissions also fail to provide convincing evidence to demonstrate there are no other alternative sites available.

Furthermore, the proposed development will result in a significant change and an intensification of land use on what is currently a green field site, introducing new built form in undeveloped countryside.

The proposal will impact on the tranquillity of the site as a result of increased movement and activity and the extensive changes to topography will result in a degree of harm to the surrounding landscape, failing to sustain the local distinctiveness and character of the locality.

Taking all factors into account, the proposed development is contrary to Policies 1, 2 (part 1), 5(part 1), 12(part 1a), 23(parts 1 and 2) and 27(parts 2, 3 and 4) of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030; Policies T1 and C1(part 6) of the Cornwall Council Climate Emergency Development Plan Document February 2023; and paragraphs 8, 116 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

### **Objections submitted to Cornwall Council - Awaiting Decision**

Panderosa Farm, Bodmin  
Erection of 58 Dwellings  
Planning application PA23/07573

Bosavern, St Just  
Retrospective construction of a lake  
Planning application PA23/05034

Trewidden Road St Ives  
Erection of a Premier Inn hotel  
Planning application PA22/11311

Penhale Camp, Camp Road, Holywell  
Bay  
Holiday and leisure facilities.  
Planning application PA22/02896

Penhale Camp, Camp road, Holywell  
Bay  
9 new dwellings 3 refurbished dwellings  
Planning application PA22/02794

Hotel Bristol, Narrowcliff, Newquay  
180 apartments, 44 bed aparthotel  
Planning application PA22/10572

Trelissick Gardens, Feock  
New 250 space carpark, crossing,  
access  
Planning application PA22/10184

The Garrack Hotel, St Ives  
Variations to condition 16  
Planning application PA21/09237

Cold Northcott Wind Farm  
Repowering & extension of windfarm  
PA23/02727

Gillyflower Golf Club  
19 holiday lodges & classroom  
Planning application PA23/02502

Carland Cross, Trispen  
Solar farm & battery storage  
Planning application PA23/02629

Prow Park Business Village, Newquay  
Change of use of land for containers  
Planning application PA22/05334

Barn Hill, Cadgwith, Ruan Minor,  
Helston  
Construction of a detached dwelling  
Planning application PA21/12133

Trefresa Farm Rock Wadebridge  
Hotel, restaurant, cinema, spa, 22  
lodges  
Planning application PA20/10041

Halgavor Moor  
Development of up to 540 dwellings.  
Planning application PA20/10618  
Paused by Natural England 05/22

### **Appeals to the Planning Inspectorate - Awaiting Decision**

PA22/06771 APP/3320137

Mount Hope Carnon Downs  
Appeal against refusal. Up to 3 dwellings

PA23/00924 APP/3320596

Land North West of Ramehead Cottages, Rame Head  
Appeal against Prior Approval refusal for new agricultural building.

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