



NEWSLETTER

Message from the Chairman

In the past few weeks we have relaunched our website which has been re-built using new technologies. This will make it easier to maintain and easier for users to navigate.

What better time to thank those who managed the old site: Charlie and his son James and also Adam Long for his work on the new design and with new media technology for the Society.

The Treasurer and other committee members have been helping create a complete and integrated membership list. We need to collect email addresses from as many members as possible so we can reduce our costs (especially time-costs for hand delivery) and speed up communications with members. Please will you **email** your details to the address at the bottom of page two.

We urge all local residents to join us and support our work to make Epping a better place to live, work and shop. See the back page for a membership form.

Dates for your diaries

Christmas lunch

Sunday 8 December, Pelly Court

Annual General Meeting

Monday 3 March

Tour of the new St Johns School site

April, date to be confirmed

Epping Town Centre Festival

Saturday 26 July

Epping Town Show

Sunday 3 August

Everyone is most welcome at our open meetings.

The committee's work

We have one of the hardest working committees we have ever had in the Epping Society. Unfortunately most of that work is our paid employment which does often get in the way of our voluntary work for the town. Partly through the younger age of many committee members than in the past and a change in working patterns, fewer of our committee are able to spend as much time as they would wish on promoting our objectives, especially in working hours.

One of our main activities is the review of planning and development proposals, both large and small. We are fortunate that Charlie Geddes can devote so much attention to this, even when on holiday or when visiting family in Scotland. Online access to the EFDC planning portal enables Charlie and others on the committee to check planning applications but the Local Plan documents on the web are much more cumbersome to access.

The committee are considering standard criteria against which to judge planning cases in order to decide whether to support, object or make no submission. We have already used the internet to more quickly consult among the committee because deadlines often did not fit with committee meetings.

During the year we will have attended four public events with banners, advertising and leaflets.

Our key messages for members and friends

CPREssex

We continue to receive reports and publications from CPRE which is very active in making the case for conservation and protection of the countryside.

You can find a lot of interesting material on the CPRE website at <http://www.cpressex.org.uk/>.

CPRE events are worth watching-out for, such as the talk by their President and former Poet Laureate Sir Andrew Motion in Colchester recently. He spoke about his upbringing in the Essex countryside and the importance of preserving the local landscape he loves.

Sir Andrew succeeded popular author Bill Bryson as CPRE president in 2012, has a deep affection for Essex and encouraged everyone who cares about protecting rural England to take action.

'It's absolutely vital we engage a new generation', he said, 'This is partly so that we can look ahead and feel the defence of the countryside is in good hands, and partly so we can encourage as many people as possible to enjoy and understand our beautiful landscapes.'

Like us CPRE supports the Green Belt "The effects of current policies on the countryside are devastating, with the Green Belt, protected areas and, above all, our 'ordinary' but hugely valued countryside threatened with destruction. Once it's gone, it's gone forever. Destruction of the countryside is totally unnecessary when there are enough suitable brownfield sites for around 1.5 million homes."

Trevor Roberts

Planning

This year the committee carefully reviewed 269 local planning and tree applications, notifications and appeals. We supported one and objected to 34 others. Applications can be viewed on the EFDC website (search EFDC planning portal).

All our responses are made after consultation among the committee and, when time permits, these are also reviewed at full committee meetings.

We had a lively debate in the year over the vegetation which Marks & Spencer have added to their premises. Some members were worried about its possible deterioration if maintenance was not done well, and its impact on the High Street. In the end we supported this but highlighted the need to reposition the plaque to Sir Winston Churchill more prominently on the High Street frontage, which has been done.

We objected to the new Tesco signage which we felt was too dominant in what is a market town, but our views have not yet prevailed.

Charlie Geddes



Membership subscriptions

Membership is due shortly and we ask that you complete a Standing Order Mandate to make it easier for you and for us in the future. Please see the web site or ask me for a form on 01992 577113.

£5 per household enables us to continue to represent the interests of the town in the face of growing threats of over-development.

The more members of the Society, the more influence we will have which is vital in the coming year as the Local Plan and St John's Consultation move towards a final decision.

Mike Rigelsford

"Development on green belt land on the Epping and Harlow border would be a disgrace, according to a residents' group" (reference to Latton Priory site).

Among the contributions to the debate about development was an interview with Steven Harding (Vice Chairman) in the Epping Guardian (10 September 2013) http://www.guardian-series.co.uk/news/efnews/10666108.Potential_ho_using_hit_shameful_says_society/

Among other robust statements Steven was quoted as saying, "The Epping Society, which represents hundreds of residents, has accused the Council of being reckless and described the news as "shameful"."

"The simple answer is that not enough work has been done to identify appropriate sites for development, such as brownfield sites."

Green Belt

For some the mention of Green Belt brings to their mind a bunch of NIMBIES who don't want development in their back yard. But the idea was not designed to cosset the few but to ensure that everyone could have open space as an amenity. Green Belt does not even have to be particularly attractive because its purpose is to prevent the merging of existing communities through further expansion.

Because of its size, the first formal Green Belt was established around London. As early as 1593, Queen Elizabeth I established a band three miles deep around the Cities of London and Westminster to prevent their growing sprawl.

Modern legislation started with Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act 1938 which allowed local authorities to buy land to prevent development. After the Second World War, there was a recognition of the need for society to control the development of land, resulting in the Town and Country Planning Act 1947. This Act laid the foundation of the modern planning system. The 1947 Act did not address the issue of Green Belts directly and left the 1938 Act unaltered but it was realised that it is not feasible for local authorities to purchase all the land needed to maintain a proper Green Belt.

What was needed was a way of controlling development without interfering with the ownership and existing use of land. Green Belt and other protected areas (SSI, etc) are a form of zoning control over the use of land.

Despite these best intentions, hardly a day goes by without further reports of plans by central and local government (including here in Epping) to allow building on protected land. The argument is made that "people have got to live somewhere" but as CPRE noted (page 2) there is enough brown field (previously developed) land for 1.5 million new homes.

Help us protect the Green Belt around Epping Forest



Application for membership

Membership Fees due by 31st March each year
 Registered Charity No: 263649
 Membership Secretary
 Epping Society
 c/o Epping Town Council, Epping Hall, St John's Road,
 Epping CM16 5JU

Please will all members try to recruit one additional member this year.

Title: Name(s): Signed:

Home address :

Postcode: Tel No: Mobile:

Email address please:

Please provide your email address if possible so we can keep you up to date with local planning issues.

Cheque payable to The Epping Society Standing order below (preferred)

Gift Aid declaration – for past, present & future donations to The Epping Society

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made today , in the past 4 years , in the future . Please tick all boxes you wish to apply.
 I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

Donor's details as above Signed:

Please notify the charity or CASC if you: Want to cancel this declaration, Change your name or home address or No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Standing Order Mandate to be completed by the Epping Society member and sent to his/her Bank

To: Bank Name: A/c Name:

Branch / Address:

A/c Sort Code: A/c No:

Please set up the following standing order and debit my/our account accordingly.

Organisation to be paid: The Epping Society

A/c Name: The Epping Society Bank Name: Barclays Bank Plc Sort Code: 20-29-86 A/c No: 63141691

Amount to be paid:	£5.00	Subsequent Payments	1 st January
First payment:	Now	Payment frequency	yearly

Your Name: *(in block capitals)*.....

Please ask your bank to use your first surname and either first name or initials as reference for the payment to avoid confusion

Signature Date of signature.....