

Dover District CPRE. Chairman's Report AGM 2013

Throughout 2013 many issues have come about, with CPRE making their views known on a great number of development proposals.

Sadly with government policy on housing seemingly ignoring the location of sites and whether they are proposed for brownfield, greenfield or even AONB, we have seen one particularly large development accepted in a supposedly protected area.

Dover district council have only been interested in reaching their target figure of 14,000 properties within their LDF. Even then they brought out an addendum for more housing sites, mainly in the Walmer and Sandwich areas.

We recognise the fact that more housing is required as is more energy. However, building on good quality agricultural land, spoiling the countryside before using brownfield land and not refurbishing empty homes is irresponsible planning which may well result in Dover District being effectively concreted over.

As a committee, we keep a careful watch on the weekly planning applications lists, frequently supporting local residents who are interested in campaigning against development in their areas. We also support many community and parish councils in their opposition to lots of development proposals.

Currently, the big issue is that of fracking for methane gas at Guston, Tilmanstone and Sheperdswell. Exploration licences have all been applied for at these locations, and planning permission for test boreholes is currently being consulted on at Kent County Council. Many people are greatly concerned by this which resulted in around 200 people attending CPRE Protect Kent's recent public meeting on the subject.

Other issues which have been causing the committee concern are solar farms, Manston Airport, Richborough waste site and the new route of pylons which will stretch from Richborough to Canterbury, traversing some of Dover district.

We also campaigned against the development proposals for Western Heights and Farthingloe, and after being disappointed by the Secretary of Sates refusal to call in the application, seriously considered pursuing the matter through Judicial Review.

CPRE also had a stand at the East Kent Ploughing Match. This was well attended and many visitors showed a keen interest in CPRE.

Finally, I would thank our committee members for their support throughout the year with a special thank you to Mary Shaw who is our minute's secretary.

Derek Wanstall Chairman

5-10-2013