

Campaign to Protect Rural England | Policy Committee Meeting

Minutes of the Policy Committee held at CPRE 5-11 Lavington Street, London, SE1 0NZ on Tuesday 5th February 2019.

ITEM	ITEMS NOTES	ACTION
1.	ATTENDANCE	
	Apologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Su Sayer (Chair of Trustees) • Lyndis Cole • Kaley Hart 	
	Members Present <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Simmons (Chair of Policy Committee) (referred to below as the Chair) • Catherine Le Grice Mack (referred to below as Cate) • Sabine Mosner • Richard Lloyd • Stan Jones • John Hobson (Honorary Standing Counsel) • John Croxen • Anna Hall 	
	Staff Present <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Fyans (Deputy Chief Executive) • Paul Miner (Head of Strategic Plans and Devolution) • Matt Thomson (Head of Planning) • Crispin Truman (Chief Executive) • David Walsh (Government and Rural Affairs Officer) • Emma Marrington (Senior Rural Policy Campaigner) • Daniel Carey-Dawes (Infrastructure Policy Manager) • Lucy Hawthorne (Head of Campaigns) • Graeme Willis (Senior Rural Policy Campaigner) 	
	Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Stockton (Campaigns and Policy Assistant) 	
2.	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sabine raised the need to amend an autocorrected sentence under section 10 which contained a misplaced reference to ‘biomass’. • Stan clarified that under point 6c it was incorrectly stated that CPRE Buckinghamshire have held seminars relating to the Ox-Cam Arc. They were due to be held in future. 	<p>The minutes will be amended before finalisation.</p>
3.	MATTERS ARISING	
	<p>Paul updated the committee on ongoing work around the Ox-Cam Arc. Since the last meeting CPRE Oxfordshire have commissioned Survation to conduct opinion polling on the scheme in local areas. The results are expected in the coming months.</p>	
4.	CHAIR’S COMMENT	

	The Chair commended recent media coverage. Particular reference was made to the LUC mapping of access to National Parks and AONBs, which was featured in the Guardian, and coverage of the Star Count across the BBC.	
5.	REPORT FROM THE TRUSTEE BOARD	
	<p>Crispin provided a brief update from the Trustee Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new brand and visual identity were unanimously approved at the extraordinary board meeting on 4th February. The new strategy for 2020-26 remains in consultation. In the preceding weeks four Network consultation events were held across the country. The draft strategy received mostly positive comments and suggestions for work programmes to undertake. The Board will meet on 21st March to consider the 2nd draft. They will meet in June to adopt the strategy in time for the combined AGM/Conference on 26th/27th June when the brand and strategy will be launched. Crispin invited the members of PC to CPRE's Women and the Countryside event to be held on Weds 6th February. <p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cate noted that the Women and the Countryside event clashed with Network meetings. She requested notice of such events further in advance and suggested consultation when choosing future dates. Crispin agreed on the potential to give more notice to the Network, though noted consultation on choosing dates is often impossible due to the need to arrange external speakers and venues. John Croxson raised the difficulty of using the new strapline - 'The Countryside Charity' - for CPRE London. Crispin highlighted that this is something that could be looked at in the implementation phase. Richard challenged the use of the word 'charity' in the strapline as he felt this suggested CPRE is solely a fundraising body. The Chair highlighted the need for people to feel able to donate to CPRE. Tom underlined that the strapline helps people make the link between CPRE and the countryside, allowing the organisation to command the associated policy space. He suggested it would require exceptional circumstances to change the brand i.e. for CPRE London, as the strapline would be included in the logo itself but he acknowledged there is some scope for county groups to develop their own wider messaging. 	
VERBAL UPDATES FOR INFORMATION		
6.	HOUSING TARGETS METHODOLOGY SUBMISSION	
	<p>Matt Thomson gave an update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPRE responded to two major consultations since the PC meeting in November on housing targets methodology and reforms to permitted development rights. In both cases National CPRE ran a consultation with the Network through the online planning discussion forum, with the aspects of the consultation relating to housing numbers supplemented through discussion with the new housing numbers task and finish group of CBF, chaired by Caroline Dibden. The group produced a response that was dismissive of the Government's position to make no substantive change to the standard method for estimating local housing need despite new ONS statistics showing a significant decrease in projected household formation rates. The response criticised proposals on a new application of alternative means of calculating housing targets which would create unnecessary complexity in the planning process when the outcome of the standard methodology is claimed only to be a starting point to be negotiated through local plan examinations. The response also dismissed the proposed new definition of what it means for a housing site to be 'deliverable' which was just as confusing and unnecessary as the previous definition. CPRE called for, in effect, all sites that have a form of development consent to be considered 	

	<p>deliverable unless the developer has clearly indicated otherwise (in which case they risk forfeiting the consent).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the planning reform consultation, CPRE's response focused on the many proposals for new or extended permitted development rights, highlighting the many negative outcomes that have resulted from the existing regime and the incompatibility of these top-down imposed measures with the general principle of localism, and with several core policies of the NPPF which require communities to positively plan for and manage, for example, the extent of and mix of uses within town centres. Matt directed PC to the full responses for more details. <p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cate commented that she supported the deletion of reference to 'market signals' in the NPPF as these signals are distorted by local developers. She called for more work on ensuring transport development is closely aligned with developments and the need for more reference to 'community' as this is ultimately what housing is for but seems to be low on MHCLG's priorities. The Chair requested that PC receive links to all Government consultation responses in real time, without obligation to read all of them, so that they're better informed about the work of the National Charity. 	<p>Matt to send copies of consultation responses to the Committee.</p>
7.	SOILS REPORT REACTION, FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS	
	<p>Graeme Willis gave an overview of the Soils Report reaction and feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report, 'Back to the land: Rethinking our Approach to Soil', was released in December and received local and industry press coverage. The report was delivered directly to Michael Gove's SpAds in advance of publication, who shared it widely across DEFRA. It proved challenging to get a wide range of press coverage, partly as expected, however the Storyboard on the website produced by the comms. team provided an accessible 'front' for the report through case studies of farmers. This received a large amount of online views. Graeme distributed the report via Link, the Sustainable Soils Alliance and policy contacts. The Director of the Alliance said she was delighted to promote it. Copies were sent to 100 MPs and Peers, AONBs, National Parks and policy contacts. The report's findings were used in consultation responses in advance of publication, including on the 25 Year Environment Plan, and at roundtables such as a Chatham House seminar on land use and climate change. In the short term, we will distil the key messages of the report and aim to get these into the messaging of other organisations - e.g. via Link and Greener UK briefings. Graeme is seeking meetings with ministers and Peers but it is obviously a challenging time to get into Parliament. He hopes to bring some farmers with him to these meetings or to get ministers out to farms. The upcoming Government Peat Strategy could provide a further platform for the report, as could the ongoing Agriculture and Environment Bills. <p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair noted coverage of The Climate Coalition's report on potato chips getting smaller due to climate change as a good example of personalising the threats of climate change. Cate asked about the potential to distribute the report to the Network in a more accessible format. Graeme acknowledged that there was potential for this. Graeme thanked Cate, Anna and Kaley for their help preparing the report. 	<p>Report summary to be shared with the Network when complete</p>
8.	POSITIVE PLANNING ADVISORY PANEL, first meeting and progress	
	<p>Matt Thomson updated PC on the work of PPAP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two meetings of PPAP have been held since the last PC. Recruitment has almost been completed with Richard in the chair, alongside Christine Drury, Andrew Wood, John Croxen, Cate Mack and Michael Monk. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There remains a vacancy for external recruitment. Matt has received some suggestions which he will take forward over the next couple of weeks. • The first meeting focused on confirming the terms of reference for the Panel, how it intends to work, and a work programme. PPAP will produce final versions of all of the above for the record, but the headlines are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Panel’s recommendations will be about principles and not about particular solutions (especially not site-specifics). ○ It will operate through meetings, virtual discussions on the Network forum, select-committee-style evidence sessions, and possibly site visits to particularly positive and/or negative examples of housing development. ○ It is focusing on positive policy for Green Belts, Urban Extensions and Garden Settlements, with Green Belts being the first priority. • The second meeting, to which Matt sent apologies, focused on a discussion of Green Belts, which had not yet been written up. • The Panel also discussed priorities for site visits, and will report back separately on a programme for these. <p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair felt there is a formal challenge to Green Belt through the prioritisation of housing as well as ‘hidden’ challenges of de-designation and the sneaking through of developments. He reiterated that the formal planning role of the Green Belt is the separation of settlements. • The Chair further highlighted that the quality of Green Belt has limited relation to this planning function. He noted the potential for CPRE to develop a clearer vision for Green Belt, including its planning function as the main element. • Richard highlighted the issue of development ‘jumping’ the Green Belt in Gloucestershire and creating increased traffic. • John Hobson asked if the Legal Panel will have a role in these discussions so that he can prepare accordingly. Matt confirmed ‘almost certainly’. The Chair suggested de-designation as a key issue as well as the place of development in the planning system more widely • Cate noted the original purpose of the Green Belt was to stop ribbon development, reiterating the need to consider the place of transport. 	
9.	STRATEGIC REVIEW, GREEN PAPER AND NETWORK CONSULTATION	
	<p>It was decided this topic had been covered in earlier comments (see Section 5). Crispin clarified that the role of PC in the review process was to contribute in clarifying key policy positions. Crispin also noted upcoming lunches with partner organisations and stakeholders to discuss future strategic priorities.</p>	
10.	HEALTH AND WELLBEING	
	<p>Tom Fyans gave an update to PC on initial work relating to health and wellbeing, outlining the potential for future discussion and papers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom noted that the new purpose and brand will allow us to talk in a different way - to emphasise the ‘why’ in our communications with a health and wellbeing agenda as one focus. This must be underpinned by clear evidence on health and wellbeing. • Professor Jules Pretty from the University of Essex met with SMT to discuss the importance of a ‘5-minute dose of nature’. His work suggests society does not place investment in the right places for public benefit leading to poor health outcomes. CPRE needs to look at the potential for more work on tranquility in relation to the health agenda. Jules will speak at the AGM/conference about this. • Tom noted that CPRE could explore an equivalent to the National Trust’s list of ‘50 Things to do before you’re 11¾’. <p>Comments</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard suggested a lot of what CPRE does already could be ‘health and wellbeing proofed’ much like climate change proofing policies, discussed at the last PC. Most of what we do should have a health and wellbeing angle, at the end of the day it is all about people. • Stan noted many of our members already live in or visit the countryside and that a key challenge lies in getting people out of towns and into the countryside. They could be future members and campaigners. • Anna commented that in her day job she works with Sport England aiming for ‘active design’ in development. She offered to discuss evidence sharing with the Sport England evidence directorate and her contacts. • The Chair highlighted the role of Local Authorities, who may conduct health and wellbeing assessments for inclusion in local plans. However, as these are not a statutory requirement they cannot do much with them. • PC were interested in hearing more about the topic. 	
ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION		
11.	GLOVER REVIEW, presentation of LUC data and Q&A	
	<p>Emma Marrington presented slides on CPRE’s response to the Glover Review of National Parks and the LUC mapping data submitted alongside:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom mentioned the high quality feedback received from the Glover Panel and partner organisations. He praised Emma’s role in this. • Tom noted that using access to National Parks and AONBs as our key policy ask made the response more exciting and led to good media coverage. • Emma thanked PC for their input into response. <p>CPRE’s three strategic recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Access (every child under 11 to visit as part of curriculum, engage with people and communities who would not normally visit) • A holistic approach to planning in AONBs (links to Beauty Betrayed, two or more constituent based planning authorities should have a consistent set of specific area-based policies adopted by all the constituent planning authorities in their local plans. • Affordable Housing <p>18 other recommendations were made, including on nature conservation and biodiversity, farming, transport, future designations, resourcing, planning, and governance.</p> <p>Emma talked PC through the mapping which formed part of the CPRE submission to the call for evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping of England’s NPs and AONBs by LUC was launched on 4th Feb. 24% of England is covered by AONBs/NPs. • Data assessed land cover, priority habitats, nature conservation, cultural heritage, rivers and chalk streams, and accessibility. • The mapping sought to highlight just how important the network of AONBS and NPs is. <p>Accessibility headlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mapping showed people’s proximity to the nearest AONB/NP. • Certain areas of the country have considerably less access, such as the area between Grantham, Leicester and Kettering. • Train lines, cycle routes and bus stops were also mapped. • Socioeconomic data highlighted that often those in least advantaged areas are furthest from a 15-mile catchment zone. • 36% of the population don’t live within the catchment zone, i.e. are without ‘easy access’. • 28 cities have less than 10% of their area within a catchment zone. • 49.3% of the 10% most deprived people do not have ‘easy access to an AONB/NP vs 27% for the 10% least deprived. 	<p>Emma to distribute link to mapping to PC</p>

	<p>National CPRE have been liaising with DEFRA to ensure that the CPRE response is noted and we have made an open invitation to discuss the mapping in detail. The Glover Review Panel is expected to release a report in September with policy recommendations for Government but there is no official requirement for a Government response.</p> <p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair praised the mapping as particularly useful and suggested the potential for this kind of mapping of housing developments for PPAP. Matt suggested Felix may be able to do some GIS work on this. • Sabine noted that the mapping was hugely useful and raised the potential for filling the Leicester area gap with a new designated area. Not necessarily with full designation but some form of protected status. She noted that this could be investigated as a future area of work. Richard noted that the National Forest falls within that area and has been a successful project in creating a new landscape. • Tom referenced back to our charitable objectives and noted the need to consider who would benefit the most from a new designation. He noted CPRE's Glover response sought to pose provocative political and socio-economic questions to the Review panel rather than necessarily providing all the answers/solutions. • John Hobson raised the issue of legal terminology as mentioned in the Glover recommendations. He referred to differences between the 'duty to have (due) regard for...' designated areas. He suggested instead the use of 'special' regard which has legal force and would give wider protections. Richard commented that he liked this idea as the current requirements lack teeth. • Anna mentioned that the maps even come up well on mobile phones and emphasised the role of transport as a factor in access. People may live in a NP/AONB but drive through it to visit a different one. Emma acknowledged the challenges of affordability for public transport and accommodation. • Cate noted she had recently taken on a role as a board member of the Cotswolds AONB and is worried about the financial future of AONBs. Emma noted this was mentioned in CPRE's Glover Review response, noting the disparity in funding between NPs and AONBs despite the having the same status of protection. Cate also called for AONBs to be made statutory consultees in the planning process. Emma noted the challenges this could pose with AONBs lacking resources to adequately fulfil this role. • The Chair asked if the Glover Review Panel will be independent in its reporting or channeled via the civil service/Secretary of State. Emma noted that she hoped it would be independent, and Richard mentioned the review was originally advertised as independent. • Sabine noted the maps could be taken as a call for more affordable housing to be built within NP/AONB areas. She suggested potential CPRE activity in exploring how affordable housing can be delivered on the ground, potentially via a tool kit. Cate noted Exmoor as an example of such work. Sabine commented on the need to explore which policies actually work. Tom mentioned that work was already ongoing in this area with Jo Lavis, a rural housing consultant, developing a toolkit for local groups on delivering rural affordable housing in practice beyond the policy and theory. 	
12.	CLIMATE CHANGE, developing programme	
	<p>Daniel Carey-Dawes and Lucy Hawthorne presented a paper on Climate Change (CC) and a draft timeline and structures for a task and finish group, chaired by Sabine, to explore this throughout 2019 to update CPRE policy.</p> <p>Tom introduced this section by noting that the CC work links to strategic review consultation feedback where it was felt that CC did not appear strongly enough. Tom noted that he views CC as the strategic driver behind everything, so is conscious of the need to bring this to the forefront.</p>	

Cate commented on the need to manage natural landscapes as a means through which to mitigate CC and the need to ensure natural capital stays on the agenda.

Daniel gave an overview of the policy context noting that CC was back on the agenda having 'gone away' from political priorities and public consciousness in the years following the credit crunch. This return has been instigated by a series of reports and by the visibility of extreme weather. He highlighted the recent IPCC report which said there are only 12 years left for action to ensure warming is limited to 1.5 degrees. A Committee on Climate Change (CCC) Report, 'Managing the Coast in a Changing Climate', found some landscapes and infrastructure are 'unlikely to be viable' in future years due to CC. A further CCC report on land use made similar recommendations to the CPRE 'Landlines' report, citing the need for a holistic approach to land use. The report also asked difficult questions without easy answers.

Daniel then updated on plans to date, mentioning the need to consider how we communicate CC as there is little sense to having excellent policy if it is not understood by supporters. New policies need to reflect the political realities of 2019, the new brand and conclusions of the purpose project as well as new evidence on CC. Even if some current policies stay the same, there is a need to ensure they are backed up by the latest evidence. Overall, this will be a large undertaking but also an exciting process if it allows CPRE to carve out a unique role in protecting the countryside from CC. CC is the biggest threat to the countryside so we need to ensure we are at forefront of these debates.

In comments emailed to the Chair in advance, Kaley raised her support for the proposal to make CC a cross-cutting issue that is embedded as a consideration in all CPRE's work as well as the need to ensure current positions are fit for purpose. She noted that some of the most sensitive policy positions may relate to energy infrastructure impact on the landscape but welcomed the proposals for the task and finish group to look at mitigation and adaptation across a wide range of sectors. She noted her enthusiasm to be involved in looking at land use as a task and finish group member.

Lucy gave an overview of the process for the new Group. She noted the need to ensure this policy development process is conducted alongside the purpose project to avoid waiting a year for work to begin in earnest. Broadly the process will run from February until December with a final paper to be presented to the Trustee Board in December. This will ensure we have updated policies in place in time for the beginning of the new strategy in 2020. February to April will serve as a preparatory period during which an initial audit of existing CPRE policies will be undertaken to assess if they are fit for purpose. Any areas that are missing will also be explored. Lucy gave the example of forestry which had been raised several times during the meeting. This process will inform a series of provocation papers laying out questions for the task and finish groups to consider. These papers will be ready for PC to review at the meeting in April. The papers will be supplemented by a 'statement of intent' to guide the overall direction, featuring a series of tests that the task and finish group should meet.

The overall process will be chaired by Sabine split into four areas (full titles TBC)- Energy, Transport (and other infrastructure), Farming (and forestry/land use) and Housing/planning. Energy will run from April-Oct, others June-Oct. All four strands will ultimately be collated into an overall CPRE vision on CC.

External partner roundtables on each of the four areas will provide an external balance. The process will further be underpinned by research into supporter opinions on CC. CPRE Network input to the process will be undertaken through of online surveys and in person events to ensure accessibility of input.

Comments

- The Chair emphasised the need to recruit expert volunteers, if possible from the Network, when populating the task and finish groups and noted it

would be useful to liaise with the County Branch Forum on this with Stan functioning as a liaison between CBF and the group.

- Sabine will chair the energy group with members of PC chairing other streams.
- Sabine praised Lucy's excellent summary and called for the need to consider both mitigation and adaptation as these often interact in a complex manner. She also added the need to ensure that we bring the local effects of CC home to people in order to get them to focus on what we need to do and why.
- The Chair highlighted the challenge of people seeing CC as too big and something within which individuals have limited agency. We need to acknowledge that it is happening and, in the extremely unlikely event it is not, by acting to adapt and mitigate we can make a better countryside. We can certainly work with partners but need to find CPRE's niche.
- Crispin added that we need to focus on where we add value as if we take on too much we may get swamped. It is legitimate for us to have policy on a wide range of things but that does not hold us to undertaking activity in all of these areas. He suggested that we change the name of the task and finish group to a 'policy formulation' group. The Chair welcomed suggestions for new names for this group.
- John Croxen asked where urban dimensions sit within the work? On energy, cities are more capable of reducing energy usage than the countryside. On transport, some of the worst issues with pollution are in cities. He questioned how to ensure that people who live in cities relate to this work.
- The Chair noted his enthusiasm for trees to be given weighting in this process due to the important role they could play. John Croxen mentioned that this was a key facet of the new London plan.
- Cate added that the drivers of CC are universal but that the most vulnerable areas are rural. This presents an opportunity for the rural land that people value to help cities. She also cited the need for econometrics behind this process to ensure that costs are appropriately factored in.
- Richard noted that he believed the proposals to be achievable if subdivided as appropriate.
- Anna added she was happy to volunteer for a role on farming/land use.
- Matt mentioned that other CC related issues such as air quality can tackle climate sceptics/deniers' unwillingness to act. CC is a threat to the countryside but he also views some of the solutions as threats themselves e.g. biofuels which could take up land needed for food.
- The Chair proposed that CPRE needs some economic expertise from the Network for this work. He referenced the issue of viability of micro-generation on the grid and that knowledge of the energy sector would also be welcome. He suggested that recruitment should be specific in terms of the expertise requested.
- Graeme added that farming will be a contentious issue in terms of cutting livestock numbers and impact on urban diets. CPRE can offer an integrated approach as he is skeptical of the CCC report which calls for intense grain production without considering the environmental impact of this in itself.
- Graeme gave further clarification on the role of biofuel. John Croxen and Cate further suggested that the economics of biomass have been found not to stack up.

Lucy underlined the need to be clear on the scope and the purpose of this process as this is a policy process updating our positions rather than a process to decide future campaigning activities for CPRE. These will be decided once the policy process is complete. The policy needs to be accessible and relevant to peoples' everyday lives. What CPRE offers that is distinctive is connecting CC to the countryside, grounding a complex issue in local realities.

Tom added that CC is the biggest policy challenge we will face. We need to take a holistic view due to conflicting land use challenges. The urgency to act on CC once we find our USP is a moral one. CC is a moral issue, a social issue and an environmental issue. He sought to remind PC that the position we are starting from is a perception that CPRE is an obstacle to tackling CC.

	<p>The Chair noted that there has been change in the countryside for millennia. There remains a question about what is appropriate for the countryside but also the need to understand that the countryside is a constantly changing area.</p>	
<p>13.</p>	<p>ENVIRONMENT BILL</p>	
	<p>David Walsh presented an overview of the current progress of the Environment Bill after draft clauses were published on 19th December:</p> <p>CPRE were invited to a lock-in advanced reading of these clauses. Our initial response stated the clauses represent a good start but could be better. The clauses published in December were those required through the EU (Withdrawal) Act, transposing environmental principles currently covered by EU Law and establishing a new system of environmental governance as well as placing the 25 Year Plan on a statutory footing. The 2nd part of the draft legislation covering objectives and targets to flesh out these principles is expected in May or June.</p> <p>The first tranche of measures is currently undergoing pre-legislative scrutiny. CPRE contributed evidence to this process, working in partnership with Greener UK, as the Bill relates to EU exit and is beyond our capacity. The Bill has the potential to touch on lots of aspects of our work so we will need to prioritise our policy asks - as outlined in App B.</p> <p>PC sought clarity over the degree to which EU legislation is already transposed into UK law. John Hobson and David clarified that the Bill is for the purpose of replacing the enforcement powers of the EU which will be lost after EU exit, as well as strengthening some measures that have been transposed through the EU (Withdrawal) Act and secondary legislation but remain on an unsteady statutory footing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair noted that one of the Bill’s proposals is for a watchdog to allow enforcement. David pointed out that under the proposals the watchdog would not be independent as its funding and board members would derive from the Secretary of State. • The Chair queried what a statutory footing for the 25 Year Environment Plan would mean in practice. David responded the Government would have a duty to report annually and conduct more detailed 5 year reviews on its progress against the plan and whether the plan itself remains fit for purpose. Progress would also be independently assessed by the OEP. • The Chair further sought to understand the degree to which these proposals mark a weakening of environmental protections. • Tom reflected on the underlying politics of Gove’s vision for the UK as an environmental world leader and a ‘green Brexit’. The gap between EU regulations and these proposals is large. For example, currently the Government has been repeatedly taken to court by Client Earth over breaching air pollution limits when judicial reviews have been referred to the European Court of Justice (ECJ). • Sabine asked if these proposals would replace judicial reviews. David responded that judicial reviews would continue but could be prohibitively expensive, whereas the European Commission (EC) provides a free method of complaint. Cases could be brought through the new watchdog, the Office of Environmental Protection (OEP), to mimic the role of the EC. Currently the OEP lacks the most potent enforcement mechanism which is fines. It is unclear how this could work in the UK as the Government cannot fine itself. David however highlighted that given the list of issues outside the proposed OEP’s remit major issues could be missed. • John Hobson confirmed that the Environment Agency would retain all its existing powers following a question from Sabine. • On planning policy, the Chair questioned whether CPRE should campaign for greater inclusion of planning policy. David suggested that some aspects of planning policy such as biodiversity or environmental net gain could be legislated on through the 2nd part of the bill. This could provide an angle 	<p>David to circulate further information on the environment bill detailing Greener UK’s positions</p>

through which to call for inclusion if some, but not all, planning issues are considered environmental.

- Tom clarified that the proposed areas are those that CPRE will propose in asks as part of the wider Greener UK coalition but might not be seen in wider discussions as members discuss different issues with their supporters.
- The Chair asked if CPRE has a policy which explains what is meant by a strategic approach to land. David noted that this does not exist beyond the Landlines report and the report itself does not outline a specific vision. The Chair raised the potential for CPRE to work on this topic. Richard noted that this could be linked to work on CC and Anna suggested the use of mapping.
- Sabine sought clarification as to how visible our campaigning is on these issues. Tom responded that Greener UK a varied group of organisations with different areas of expertise, therefore different partners are trusted to work on their special interest areas on behalf of the coalition. Tom added that the key asks to Government will be made through the coalition but that issue specific campaigns will be conducted involving CPRE supporters.

The members of PC outlined some of the challenges posed to CPRE by the proposed themes-

- Graeme asked if thinking on soil in terms of differentiating soil health and quality related to best and most versatile land and therefore whether this related to the remit of planning policy.
- The Chair noted the potential for planning to be included across the proposed themes.
- Anna raised that the theme of hedgerows could be expanded to include landscape character more broadly, including dry stone walls and woodland. Cate echoed Anna and suggested that as a landscape charity we should include animal habitats and headlands, ploughing under trees etc. She considered that we could look at our wish list of what we want and then see how that matches with Greener UK's rather than looking for holes in the proposed areas.
- Sabine suggested that it may be useful to consider how our key issues would sit in a post-Brexit world in relation to Greener UK's asks. Tom responded that this might have to wait for clarity on the Brexit deal.
- Matt mentioned that we need to ensure that 'the environment' does not just include 'green stuff' but also cultural heritage, dry stone walls etc.
- Tom noted that we have called for greater use of National Character Assessments to inform this thinking.
- The Chair acknowledged that if we were to make planning asks we would need to be clear what we are asking the OEP to enforce on and what they will enforce against.
- David responded that this would depend on how effective Greener UK are in their lobbying. We would ask that responsibilities to meet environmental standards should not just be on ministers, as currently, but on wider public authorities and other public bodies, allowing the OEP to hold these bodies to account. At that point the relationship between the Environment Bill and the planning system would become substantially closer.
- The Chair noted that this could cause MHCLG to consider planning policy in this light, which could have a significant effect.

In comments submitted in advance of the meeting Kaley raised the following points:

- She agreed with the key themes for CPRE but had some additions.
- The definition of the natural environment in the Bill is very narrow- this seems to exclude the historic environment and does not seem sufficiently wide in scope to include landscape. Trying to widen this scope would seem important from a CPRE perspective.
- She felt it important that CPRE be involved in making sure that the objectives set for the 2nd part of the Bill are as wide-reaching as possible, in particular including landscape among them.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no mention of climate in the Bill. The Government argue that this is justifiable as climate is already covered by other legislation. However, this is insufficient as the CCC has no compliance role. CPRE should argue for climate to be within the competence of the OEP. • She is concerned about what will happen to baseline standards currently operating for agriculture under cross-compliance. There is no mention of these in the Ag Bill and the justification was that this would be in the Env. Bill but again these are not mentioned. It is unclear whether they will be in Part 2 of the Bill. • Finally, she agreed on the need for a strategic approach to land. Gove's previous comments that this is what the Env. Bill will provide do not appear to hold true. In pushing for a strategic approach, CPRE has an invaluable role to play in ensuring any approach considers landscape character and arguably this could be the foundation of any such strategy. <p>Tom highlighted that CPRE's response to DEFRA's biodiversity net-gain consultation was ongoing and related to several areas mentioned. He summarised by acknowledging that National CPRE would take on this input from PC and look at CPRE's relationship to Greener UK. However, what National CPRE chooses to focus on will ultimately be a capacity decision.</p>	<p>Tom and National CPRE to look again at the first key theme area on planning (see App B) and consider how the other areas mapped against both Greener UK and CPRE priorities.</p>
AOB		
11.	<p>Sabine added that Michael Gove is to prepare a rural transport strategy this spring and asked if anyone knew anything more about this. She believed it was mentioned during Gove's evidence session at the Lords Rural Economy Committee.</p>	
<p><i>The meeting concluded at 3.55 pm.</i></p>		
<p>Dates for Policy Committee in 2019: 2nd April, 4th June, 3rd September, 5th November</p>		