



EECS NEWSLETTER

East of England Civic Societies

Issue 2

June 2009

Chairman's Report – Peter Landshoff

You all know of the sad demise of the Civic Trust and of the efforts to create a new national structure from the wreckage - see below article on Civic Trust Initiative. The chairs of the regional associations are determined that, whatever happens, they will continue to operate, and to collaborate with each other. Strong feelings have emerged that the Civic Trust was not sufficiently responsive to the needs of its member societies, and we are determined that whatever new structure emerges it will be bottom-up. But this needs input from you, so please do let me or other members of the EECS committee know about your needs. Note that EEACTS has become EECS: the "Trust" is no more.

Our region is the second fastest growing in the country, with a projected increase in population of almost 25% by 2031. This causes enormous pressure on the housing supply and on transport – the Highways Agency estimates that there will be 45% more traffic on the regional strategic road network by 2021. Detailed planning for the development of the region in the decade up to 2031 is now under way. A report from consultants Arup to the East of England Regional Assembly EERA in January (to see it, click [here](#) ①) suggests that Cambridge, Norwich and Chelmsford become large-scale regional centres, each with populations between 300,000 and 400,000. It lists other centres with potential for large-scale growth, including Ipswich, Colchester and Bury St Edmunds.

On 1 April the responsibility for the planning of the development of the region passed from one unelected body to another: from EERA to the Regional Development Agency EEDA. A consultation document issued by EERA in March recognises the need "to set up a cross party Members' Task Group to examine how the local authority dimensions of the Sub National Review might be implemented in the East of England". It suggests a complicated structure of new bodies to achieve this. To see the document, click [here](#) ②). Meanwhile, EERA and EEDA are working on the new East of England Plan and are inviting comments. See below.

Our region is hugely important to the economy of the country, but we need to make sure that its expansion preserves its attractiveness as a place in which we live and work. This must surely be of concern to all the civic societies in the region. For this reason, we are working with the Cambridge Preservation Society and the East of England RSA to organise a seminar to look at the whole process by which the development of the region is decided, and to try to inject new vision into it. For details of how the meeting is coming together click [here](#) ③, or see overleaf for a summary. Please put **17 September 2009** into your diary.

The Department for Transport is consulting the regions on its strategy for Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS). On 30 March I was one of a dozen people from across our region, people from transport, the NHS, National Trust etc, to discuss what are the drivers that lie behind the transport system with the consultant appointed by EERA and EEDA to frame the region's response. The consultant's summary of his various discussions may be found [here](#) ④. They are an interesting summary of the many non-transport issues that affect the provision of a good transport system.

You already know of the event that EECS is organising in Bury St Edmunds on **20 June 2009**, in collaboration with the East of England RSA. We will discuss how the heritage and character of our towns can be preserved and adapted during a time of rapid expansion. A similar meeting is planned for later in the year, in collaboration with the King's Lynn Civic Society. Details will be available in due course.

① <http://www.eera.gov.uk/publications-and-resources/studies/topic-based-studies/regional-scale-settlement-study>

② <http://www.eera.gov.uk/Who-we-are/future-of-eera/>

③ <http://www.damtp.cam.ac.uk/user/pvl/17.9.09.doc>

④ <http://www.eera.gov.uk/publications-and-resources/studies/transport-studies/delivering-a-sustainable-transport-system>

One-day event on 17 September 2009

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EAST OF ENGLAND:

How can we avoid throttling the goose?

Organisers: Cambridge Preservation Society, Cambridgeshire Horizons, Cambridge University, East of England Civic Societies, East of England RSA, Shape East

PURPOSE

The East of England Region is hugely important to the economy of the country, but we need to make sure that its expansion preserves its attractiveness as a place in which we live and work. The meeting will re-assess the process by which the development of the region is planned and seek to inject new vision into it.

The aim is to bring together not only a wide range of professionals, but also well-informed non-professionals with a variety of backgrounds and expertise to bring in a fresh outlook. This first meeting will be wide-ranging and identify a series of issues that will then be the subject of smaller, more focused workshops, possibly spread around the region. These will generate in-depth discussion and so help and influence those who have responsibility for the future of the region.

<http://www.eera.gov.uk/News/news/2009/jan/assembly-publishes-major-settlement-study/>

http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/progress/regional/documents/east_england_factsheet.pdf

This will be a very interesting event – if you wish to receive an update on it, please e-mail planning@cpswandlebury.org.

Details of speakers, venue and booking to follow in the August EECS newsletter.

Civic Society Initiative

The following is an extract from the CSI's website:

In essence the purpose of the Civic Society Initiative is a simple one – to establish the means, within twelve months, to ensure provision of a national voice and support for the civic society movement.

The loss of the Civic Trust has prompted a groundswell of support for the civic society movement. Messages of support and practical offers of help have been received from a large number of professional bodies, local authorities, voluntary and charitable organisations and others. Over 500 civic societies have already said they want to be kept in touch with the future arrangements for supporting societies and providing a champion for the movement.

It is clear that many share the view that the civic society movement is too important for it to lose its national voice. The role of societies and local community action is as important now as it was when the Civic Trust was set up. This is the sentiment at the heart of the package of measures now being put in place to allow a range of options for the future health of the civic society movement to be explored and assessed.

A full range of options will need to be examined but three things are clear:

- the civic society movement needs an independent champion
- the movement needs to be supported as a network where the voice of individual societies and local groups can be strengthened
- the future needs to be rooted in what the societies want and they need to drive the way forward.

The core package for establishing the Civic Society Initiative which has emerged is as follows:

- one year's funding donated by the National Trust for Tony Burton to lead the Initiatives
- office accommodation and in-kind support donated by CPRE (in London) and the RIBA (in Liverpool)
- a charitable 'home' to receive funds and provide governance through the North of England Civic Trust
- a civic society convention supported by Blackpool Council and hosted by Blackpool Civic Trust in October 2009.
- English Heritage will deliver Heritage Open Days in 2009.

While there has been no decision as to whether a new organisation is even needed, it is essential that the solution meets the needs of the civic societies and other similar community groups. A top down solution will not work. The Civic Society Initiative will take an open approach and explore a full range of possibilities for the movement. This will include development of the mission, vision, values, funding, governance and name of a new organisation, or the means to do this, if it is determined one is required. It starts with an open mind, a desire to debate and involve and no presumptions as to the outcome. There will be a sounding board drawn from the civic society movement and others and an extensive debate will be undertaken, including surveys and local stakeholder events in the major cities and elsewhere. The outcome will be a set of proposals seeking to combine immediate practical viability with a 3-5 year plan of the future.

For more details, please see www.civicsocietyinitiative.org.uk or call tel 0151 708 9920 or e-mail admin@civicsocietyinitiative.org.uk

Heritage Open Days has a new home



Mid April 2009 the sad news spread that the Civic Trust was put into administration and the Heritage Open Day team are finally able to confirm, that the Heritage Open Days have found a new home with English Heritage.

English Heritage has been committed to Heritage Open Days for many years, firstly by providing core funding, secondly by lending valuable media and PR support and last, but not least, by devoting fifty percent of the Outreach team's time to Heritage Open Days. The transfer of Heritage Open Days to English Heritage will build on this long-established partnership and is a fantastic opportunity for both England's largest grassroots heritage event and the Government body for the historic environment. English Heritage not only champions historic architecture but also the thousands of organisations and volunteers who care for their local environment and contribute so much to making better places for people to live, work and play in. It is acutely aware of what the secret of Heritage Open Days' success is: your creativity and commitment.

Contact Katja Condy – Heritage Open Days Manager - kcondy@civictrust.org.uk (note e-mail contact may change in the near future). Or visit the website www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Heritage Open Days are Thursday 10 to Sunday 13 September 2009 - please let EECS know what you do in your area for one of the next newsletters.

Have your say on water: draft River Basin Management Plans consultation



Water in rivers, estuaries and other wetlands will improve under measures set out in River Basin Management Plans, drawn up for catchments across England and Wales under the Water Framework Directive.

River Basin Management Plans are the nation's plans for improving water and wetlands. Everyone uses water in their daily lives, whether for recreational activities, industry, agriculture or as a water consumer.

The proposals in these draft plans may affect you, your business or your environmental interests, we want to hear from everyone that can make a difference in the water environment. We want to know whether these draft plans focus on the right areas, whether they go far enough and how you can help achieve the targets. Please check if you are Anglian or Thames River Basin (all are being consulted on). For details see www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33106.aspx

Deadline for comments **22 June 2009**. EECS will make comments – please let us have your thoughts by the 20 June at the latest – send to planning@cpswandlebury.org

Consultation Draft: East of England Implementation Plan



The East of England set out its long-term vision for the future in its regional economic and spatial strategies published in 2008.

These set long-term, ambitious targets for economic growth, housing and affordable homes, employment, skills, the environment and more efficient use of resources.

The draft East of England Implementation Plan sets out how the region will deliver that long-term vision. It aims to create a compelling business case for investment in the East of England's economic, social and environmental assets for both public and private investors and to provide us with the evidence to accelerate the funding and delivery of key schemes.

The 12 week consultation period on this draft East of England Implementation Plan runs until midnight on **3 July 2009**. For details call Tel: 01223 713900 or see www.eeda.org.uk/implementationplan.asp.

Green Belts for a greener future: CPRE survey to help to shape the future of Green Belts

CPRE wants to see how people think the Green Belt should be used. Between April and July 2009 they are carrying out a survey. If you live or own land in those areas, they would like you to take part in the survey. It will only take a few minutes of your time and you could help shape the future of the countryside in or near to where you live.

There are two types of survey form:

- for the general public and members of community groups; and
- for landowners, land management professionals (such as planners and surveyors), tenant farmers and local authorities.

For details contact CPRE Tel: 020 7981 2800 or web pages www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/planning/green-belts/green-belts-green-belt

Note from the Editors: Currently Natural England is also undertaking some work on the Green Belt and its condition and other issues. For details contact Natural England's regional RAP team – Tel01284-762218

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill

Recently the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill finished its passage through the House of Lords. It will pass to the House of Commons shortly.

For those of you who are relatively new to this, the Bill will reform regional planning by abolishing the Regional Assemblies and merging regional spatial and economic strategies into one Regional Strategy.

CPRE has written a briefing document for MPs which we thought you might be interested to see. It gives an overview of CPRE's concerns about the Bill. Please feel free to pass it on. Contact Corinne Meakins, CPRE Regional Policy Officer Tel: 01480 396 697

Email: director@cpreeast.fsnet.co.uk

2009 LIFE+ call for proposal has now been published

Around EUR250 million is available for environmental projects under three headings:

Nature and Biodiversity

Projects should address the following objective: to protect, conserve, restore, monitor and facilitate the functioning of natural systems, natural habitats, wild flora and fauna

Environment Policy and Governance

Projects should address objectives under the following themes: climate change, water, air, soil, urban environment, noise, chemicals, environment and health, natural resources and waste, forests, innovation and strategic approaches.

Information and Communication

Projects should aim to disseminate information and raise awareness of environmental issues.

The rate of community financial support shall be a maximum of 50%. Exceptionally, a rate of 75% may be applied to projects under the Nature and Biodiversity strand which target priority species of the Birds and Habitats' Directives. The deadline for submitting proposals is **15 September 2009**.

For more info see <http://www.betaeurope.co.uk/>

English Heritage: Conservation Areas at Risk



English Heritage's new campaign will reveal how many of England's 9,300 Conservation Areas are at risk and from what. EH has asked every Local Authority in the country to complete a questionnaire on the condition of their Conservation Areas and will be publishing the results in our Heritage at Risk Register on 23 June 2009.

Get involved!

If you are worried about a proliferation of plastic windows, over-sized extensions or buildings being left derelict or even demolished, sign up with English Heritage. Then EH will keep you informed of the campaign and **in June 2009 will send you a campaign pack** providing lots of information on how residents and councils can work together to save these special historic places for the benefit of the whole community.

Designated by local authorities to protect their special character, Conservation Areas can be historic parts of cities, towns, suburbs and villages. The heart of a market town might be a Conservation Area, so too might be a street of well-preserved 1930s semi-detached houses or an isolated group of farm buildings. For details see www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.20516 or call English Heritage Tel: 0870 333 1181 (Swindon Office)

English Heritage (East): £7 million to help repair England's historic places of worship

Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage announce £7 million of Grants for Grade II Listed Places of Worship (12 May 2009) Announced in conjunction with the Government report on "improving quality of place".

The grants will help to repair 56 historic places of worship which are used by a broad range of faiths. One of the conditions of the Repair Grants for the Places of Worship scheme is that the public have a right to see those buildings which have benefited from this public money. Prospective visitors can now search on the English Heritage website for details of how to visit places of worship whose repairs have been grant-aided under the scheme. The list can be found at:

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.17628>

A copy of the application pack for Repair Grants for Places of Worship in England 2009-2010 is available from the HLF website <http://www.hlf.org.uk> or from the EH website <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>. All grant enquiries should be directed to EH Regional Offices or EH Customer Services on 0870 333 1181.

Cultural Olympics



You don't have to wait until 2012 to be part of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Cultural Olympiad, which puts culture at the heart of the Games, is going on right now and will continue up to 2012 and beyond.

The **Cultural Olympiad** will help ensure the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are 'Everyone's 2012' by giving communities throughout the UK the opportunity to join in.

The aims of the Cultural Olympiad are to:

- encourage and welcome involvement from communities across the UK, including London;
- leave a lasting legacy that improves cultural life;
- showcase excellence in the performing arts and creative industries as well as sport;
- introduce young people to the UK's many artistic communities and those from around the world;
- promote London as a major cultural capital;
- heighten economic regeneration and encourage tourism in the UK through the work of the creative industries;
- incorporate the Olympic values of 'excellence, respect and friendship' and the Paralympic vision to 'empower, achieve, inspire'.

There are 13 programmers covering the nine English regions and the three other home nations. The Cultural Olympiad is a four year programme launched in September 2008. The East of England launch had 61 activities enjoyed by 36,000 people.

The Cultural Olympiad includes the opening and closing ceremonies for the Olympic and Paralympic Games along with the torch relay, major projects such as *Discovering Places* supported by EH and *Stories of the World* supported by MLA, regional activities including those achieving the *Inspired by* mark and activities (existing or new) on *Open Weekend*.

Open Weekend will be on 24 – 26 July 2009 and will be a countdown to the Olympic Games. Local organisations could take what they are already doing and link it in to the countdown to the games. The *Inspire* Programme is new for the Olympics and provides an official brand to things genuinely inspired by the Olympic Games which meet Cultural Olympiad aims.

In view of county engagement there are still opportunities in all areas, but Norfolk seems the most advanced with its plans. Counties have been key in putting money behind projects, with some from regional cultural agencies.

Discovering Places is seeking to find new audiences for heritage. The main events will be in August 2011 and linking in with the Torch Relay. Heritage Link which is organising the programme is building on the successful Open Days scheme with a n open access festival from 2011 to 2012. As part of the same strand, CABE are creating O-space to showcase the regeneration of the Olympic Park and making the resources available. The final strand is Open Up to Nature in partnership with Natural England. Natural England is keen on piloting sustainability in this region, linking in with the work of Shape East, the regional architecture centre. It is also noted that it would be Her Majesty's the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

Open weekend: www.london2012.com/get-involved/open-weekend/index.php

Inspire Mark: <http://www.london2012.com/get-involved/inspire-programme/index.php>

Stories of the World: www.london2012.com/get-involved/cultural-olympiad/stories-of-the-world.php

Discovering Places: www.london2012.com/get-involved/cultural-olympiad/discovering-places.php
www.heritagelink.org.uk/discovering-places-2012-cultural-olympiad/

Cultural Olympiad: www.london2012.com/get-involved/cultural-olympiad/index.php

PPS4 - Planning for Prosperous Economies



On 12th July 2009 the government published the consultation on the new draft PPS4 - Planning for Prosperous Economies. This draft PPS is intended to bring together the various strands of planning policy related to the economy into one document, therefore bringing together PPS4, PPS5, PPS6 parts of PPS7 and part of the Annex of PPS14. The government hopes the integrated approach of the new PPS will provide greater certainty to businesses looking to submit planning applications and assist local authorities take speedier decisions on planning applications.

Key policies in the new PPS include:

- From draft PPS4, considering planning applications for economic growth favourably unless there is good reason to believe the costs outweigh the benefits. Developing plans that take account of long term economic benefits, including for the wider regional and national economy such as job creation, and promoting opportunities to regenerate deprived areas and support business diversification in rural areas.
- From PPG5, encouraging local authorities to make full use of the planning tools available to them to simplify and speed up the planning process, such as creating simplified planning zones.
- From PPS6, promoting the vitality of town centres, consumer choice and retail diversity. Removing the "needs test", which requires developers to show there is need for their proposal. Retaining the sequential test, which requires developers to seek the most central sites first, and a tougher "impact test" which assesses proposals against economic, social and environmental criteria so that councils can assess its impact on the town centre in reaching their decision.
- From PPS7, provide for sustainable economic growth in keeping with the need to protect the countryside.

The consultation on the draft PPS closes on 28 July 2009. As the EECS intends to make a full response to this if you would like your comments or concerns included could you please send them (by 17th July) to planning@cpswandlebury.org

A full copy of PPS4 can be found at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/consultationeconomicpps>

Seminar: 'Our Heritage, Our Future'



A successful and well-attended EECS seminar, 'Our Heritage, Our Future', was held at the Unitarian Church in Churchgate Street, Bury St. Edmunds on Saturday 20th June 2009. A full report will appear in the next issue of this e-newsletter.

A copy of the presentation slides used will be supplied by e-mail to the attendees (those without e-mail should receive a copy of these by post).

Useful websites:

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
English Heritage
Historic Environment – Local Management
Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

www.cabe.org.uk
www.english-heritage.org.uk
www.helm.org.uk
www.spab.org.uk

*For the next issue – please suggest other websites you have found useful.
In time we will use such information on a new EECS website.*

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Please e-mail or call us with updates from your area as well as other hot topics from the Region.

Submission deadline for the next EECS e - newsletter (autumn issue):

1 August 2009.

EECS Committee



From right to left: Peter Landshoff (Chair), Nigel Bell, John Bloomfield, Danny Jeffrey, Andrew Sangster, John Egan (Past Chair), Carolin Göhler. Unfortunately Jo Edwards and Terry Betts were not present at time this picture was taken.

Your contact in EECS

Each Civic Society has a representative on the EECS committee, based on county

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Members' Contact Details

EECS would prefer to send communications such as this newsletter by email rather than by post, so if an email address could be provided for your organization, it would be greatly appreciated.

Please email planning@cpswandlebury.org with your contact details if you are happy to receive information from EECS by e-mail.

New EECS Secretary



We welcome **Nigel Bell** who works as a Planning Support Officer for the Cambridge Preservation Society and he will be helping to provide administrative support to EECS.

He was born in Cambridge, and previously worked for Cambridge University Press, though he has lived and worked elsewhere; including gaining a Philosophy degree from Birmingham University and working for the Inland Revenue in London and Telford. He has just been re-elected as the County Councillor for Ely (North & East) and lives in the hamlet of Stuntney just outside Ely.

Please contact Nigel Bell primarily using e-mail planning@cpswandlebury.org or if urgent contact Tel: 01223 – 243830 Nigel Bell or Carolin Göhler (Cambridge Preservation Society).



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June 2009