

# Lizard Peninsula Heritage Trust

An environmental charity dedicated to the recognition, protection, enhancement and enjoyment of the Lizard Peninsula

Friends of the Lizard 1997-2006

Registered Charity No 1092934

Patron: Jill Morison DL



## Newsletter No 59, April 2014

### Chairman's Message

You will find our Events Calendar for 2014 with this Newsletter and once again my thanks to Lynda Blackman and her Events Committee for their hard work in assembling it. I hope you find the Programme interesting and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at these Events. Please advise us if you are planning to attend any event in case there are last minute changes necessary. We have already had our first Event of the year, although technically in the 2013-14 programme, which was a very successful lunch at Roskillys; a report on this is elsewhere in the Newsletter. On other matters, an independent report commissioned by the Government is recommending more input from local people in Planning Decisions and more attention to the quality of housing design. Both of these suggestions are very welcome in my view.

*Geoff Blackman*

### Events before the next Newsletter *(due in July 2014)*

Full details are published in the Events Programme, with this Newsletter.

#### Loe Bar - Gunwalloe walk to view wrecks *David Roberts*

Tuesday 15 April, 10.00am at Chyvarloe National Trust car-park, OS ref SW 653 236.  
Bring a picnic.

#### Tregonning Hill walk *Tim & Linda Hawkins*

Thursday 1 May, 11.00am at Trevena Cross Nurseries overflow car-park, OS ref SW 612 285.  
Bring a picnic.

#### Windmill Farm Nature Reserve *Lynda Blackman*

Saturday 17 May, 2.00pm at the car-park, OS ref SW 694 153.  
Wellingtons recommended.

#### Botanical walk to Caerthillian Valley *Steve Townsend*

Tuesday 3 June, 11.30am at Lizard Green car-park, OS ref SW 703 126.  
Bring a picnic.

#### Midsummer Madness Picnic *Events Committee*

Saturday 21 June, 8.30pm at Predannack Wollas National Trust car-park, OS ref SW668 162.  
Bring a picnic, hot drinks.

#### Prideaux Place, Padstow *Events Committee*

Tuesday 8 July, 10.30am at Mawgan Village Hall car-park, OS ref SW 702 244.  
Booking essential. Car share from Mawgan to Prideaux Place.

### Subscriptions

Renewals were due on 6 April and, as members have already been informed, they remain unchanged for yet another year at £6 for an individual or £9 for two adults at the same address. Approximately 15% of our members have paid a 'Life' subscription and a further 50% by Standing Order, which is easier for both them and us. If you are neither a Life Member nor someone who pays by Standing Order, there should be a renewal slip with this Newsletter, if you have not renewed already. The Gift Aid option significantly increases our income, without any extra cost to our Members - there is a simple tick-box to agree to this facility; we would urge all tax-paying members to do so.

### A Gannetry\* of Gourmets

It has been several years since our association's name was changed from Friends of The Lizard to the Lizard Peninsula Heritage Trust, but perhaps it is time we changed it again. LPHT could well be translated as the Lizard Prandial Hosting Team, and it certainly was on the first day of spring this year.



*A few walked around Roskilly's attractive Ponds area before lunch*

On this auspicious occasion, no fewer than nineteen of us gathered at Roskilly's to see if their restaurant could match up to all the other local eateries we have tried over the years. This annual event used to be our Christmas bash, but it seems to get later every year, so now it's just ... a bash ... but a most enjoyable one.

I will say one thing for Roskilly's: they certainly know how to load the plates. John and I had – wisely, we thought – decided not to have starters, but watching everyone else doing just that over the course of half an hour got our taste buds drooling, so it was lucky for us that Brenda, although she had conquered her bowl of butternut squash soup, hadn't managed any inroads on the accompanying two bread rolls (more like half loaves). At John's request to pass them in our direction, she willingly complied, together with butter, so we got a starter after all. Then all the main course plates came absolutely loaded with vegetables, so much so that I had to request two doggy boxes and we loaded in the remnants from several plates at our end of the table. I did eat every last crumb of my delicious mushroom and leak crumble though, and am very happy to report that veggie main courses made up 21 per cent of our orders, far above the national average.

The conversation sparked, and my nomination for this year's future guest speaker goes to Avril who could tell us about her farming ancestors and her wedding: it took place in a cathedral, no less, and her 1950's dress is surely now a priceless heirloom. Other topics came from an eclectic multitude, narrowly escaping a discussion on global warming, thank goodness, but going on to politics of the Spitting Image genre, paper knickers, dustbin collections and similarly weighty matters. The crescendo came, though, when we were filling my doggy boxes and John pointed out that I still had two t\*\*s on my plate. He was referring to the potatoes which, admittedly, were of a sausagey shape and *terra di sienna* shade. Avril repeated, in shock, "Two t\*\*ds?" whereupon John immediately corrected her, "No, two thirds!" As I had eaten far more than a third of my dinner, I suspected him of a giant wind-up, but it did produce gales of laughter. If

anyone at the other end of the lengthy table was wondering, now you know.

The only trouble with such a gathering at a rectangular board is that it precludes chatting to everyone, something about which I used to feel neurotically guilty, before it occurred to me that this works both ways, so I could afford to be more relaxed. We did get half a minute to catch up with our patron, Jill, in the car park though. Perhaps we should arrange another gathering there (not in the car park) one summery day, to eat ice creams in the sunshine, and wander round the Roskilly ponds throwing bread at the ducks and catching up with everyone we missed in March. Would that be covered by the mission statement of a heritage trust, do you think, or shall we go for the name change after all?

Our thanks, as always, to the Committee for arranging the meal, and a belated Merry Christmas to all our readers!

\* *Collective noun for gannets*

Jane Grierson

### Lights at The Lizard Point

Trinity House, London - 9<sup>th</sup> January 1812

*"Notice is hereby given that this Corporation have, in compliance with the earnest and repeated request of the owners and masters of ships trading in, and passing up and down the British Channel directed the two Lights at the Lizard Point, which have hitherto been shewn by Coal Fires and found very defective, to be altered to Oil Lights, and the necessary Lanterns and Apparatus for the purpose, which are now erecting on the Towers will be completed by Thursday the 16<sup>th</sup> of January instant, from and after which time the said Two Lights at the Lizard will be exhibited upon the improved Principle, with Argand Lamps and Reflectors, producing Lights of superior Brilliancy, that will be visible to a great distance in every direction where requisite for the guidance of navigation."*

Tony Hilton

### Planning matters

As a personal comment, it seems incredible to me that a "conservative" government, within one parliamentary period, would so alter the planning procedures, regulations and presumptions. As a former architect, landscape architect and heritage planner myself, I am only too aware of the despair that many planning officers are feeling about the current situation. It is all the more surprising that this has happened while the government purports to place great emphasis on "localism", whereby local government and local people should be able to decide their own policies, programmes and targets.

After consulting with our Chairman, therefore, we make no apology for the number of articles in just this edition of the Newsletter, showing the anger and distrust felt by the National Trust, Civic Voice and others about the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the consequences of implementation.

David Richardson

### Is National Planning Policy working?

#### Civic Voice welcomes the spotlight on planning policy

Civic Voice, the national charity for the civic society movement, has welcomed the announcement that the Department for Communities and Local Government Select Committee is to undertake a review of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Clive Betts MP, Chairman of the Committee, has announced that it will undertake the review, to see how the Framework is working two years after implementation.

Dr Freddie Gick, Chair of Civic Voice, said, "I am pleased to hear that the Select Committee will be focusing attention on the NPPF. We agree that we need more housing, but we have found that the NPPF has failed to put communities at the heart of the planning system. Civic Voice campaigned for significant changes to the original NPPF document and said at the time that

not providing councils with more time to adopt Local Plans in place in line with the NPPF was always going to be a huge issue for communities. The consequence has been to put many communities at greater risk of speculative development".

Clive Betts MP announced at a conference of planning professionals on 20 November that a 2-year review will start in March 2014, when the Committee will ask interested parties to submit evidence on the impact of the planning changes. Dr Gick finished by saying, "Our members have been informing us about situations where the NPPF is, in fact, undermining localism and we will be submitting evidence to the Review and meeting the Committee. Communities who want to inform the civic movement response should share their experiences of the NPPF in their local areas with Civic Voice."

Civic Voice

### National Trust's Chairman's anger with NPPF

The great and the good who run the National Trust, the organisation in charge of protecting the country's finest buildings and landscapes, are not meant to get cross. But Sir Simon Jenkins is furious and, it seems, has been for a large part of his six years as chairman. The reason for Sir Simon's wrath is planning regulations and specifically the Coalition's decision to rewrite them in the midst of the recession, with a new bias in favour of "sustainable development".

The Trust, and readers of the Telegraph through its "Hands Off Our Land" campaign, vigorously opposed the changes amid fears that they would give the whip hand to builders. And, two years after they were introduced, these concerns appear to have been borne out. Sir Simon, who works unpaid for the Trust, probably sees more of England on a regular basis than politicians as he criss-crosses the country visiting the Trust's 568 properties, sites and monuments spread across 635,000 acres, or 1.5 per cent of the total land mass of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A recent trip to the Thames Valley, the Cotswolds and the Severn Valley, showed planning "is the sole subject of conversation". "You go to Shrivenham, Tetbury, Buckingham, Stow-on-the-Wold, go up the Severn Valley, go to the Cotswolds; all these places, many of them in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, are at war," he says. "People are seriously angry. They feel that the Government has betrayed something they love and they feel confident that what they love is loved by most English people and the evidence supports that view. And there is no necessity for this massive development. The idea that we need 250,000 new homes and therefore they must be in the countryside is a daft statement."

A recent meeting of the Trust's ruling council, was again dominated by planning concerns. Protections for the green belt around towns and cities to control sprawl, trumpeted by the Prime Minister and others when the reforms were laid out, are proving to be virtually worthless. "We shouldn't have to fight for the green belt in 2014. At the present moment 150,000 applications are in for the green belt. This should be absolutely inconceivable," he says. "The green belt is no longer sacrosanct - that is the fact. A sensible planning regime would consider how you would best protect greenfield land around the cities. At the moment there is absolutely no trust that the Government is serious about protecting the green belt." Villages are left "traumatised" by councils which are "fighting, fighting, fighting with local communities" to push through large-scale developments as they try to meet the new five-year housing targets required under the planning changes.

Sir Simon's big complaint is that the Government has swallowed developers' arguments that they should be allowed to build on greenfield areas instead of the scorched brown earth left by former industrial sites in towns and cities. He says, "You can drive through the West Midlands, north of Manchester, South Yorkshire. You see acre upon acre upon acre of brownfield sites undeveloped, while the developers are pressing endlessly to build in the countryside outside. It is stupid."

The real tragedy is that allowing builders to develop pristine greenfield land around towns and cities means some urban areas are “left to die”. Sir Simon says, “These mill towns of the north, which I still think many of them are very attractive places, require a lot of public investment, jobs and other development. But they are the sane places for people to live. “It doesn’t make sense to put people in the Durham, Cheshire and Lancashire countryside, and simply leaving these cities to die. “Travel down the Don Valley in South Yorkshire. You just travel for mile upon mile of unused, brownfield, infrastructures land. Everything is there. The schools are there, the hospitals are there, the people are there. What do you do? You build housing estates in the Peak District. I can’t believe it. I think it is extraordinary.”

There is more than enough space in towns and cities to meet future housing demand, he says, because urban “density” in the UK’s cities is far lower than on the Continent. “The housing problems of Britain will not be solved in the countryside. That is my real message. The housing problems will be solved in the cities and there is absolutely nothing that this Government has done that promotes urban renewal.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) “was written by developers”, many of whom are large donors to the Conservative party. This was like putting the poachers in charge of the prison,” he says. “The housebuilders are a very powerful lobby. Many of them support the Conservative party. I have got no problem about this — it has always been thus. But I have never known a Government so susceptible to that particularly form of lobbying.” Sir Simon blames Nick Boles, the planning minister who took over after the NPPF was largely set in stone, for making matters worse. Mr Boles’s “aesthetic sense” is “non-existent” and he has no idea of how to protect the countryside, says Sir Simon. “Nick Boles’s form of planning is simply a fight everywhere, I don’t think he has any vision of what a protected countryside looks like.”

Hostility toward Mr Boles in the countryside is so great that the minister is now costing votes as traditional Conservatives switch to Ukip, which is now fighting the planning reforms. “Ukip leader Nigel Farage regards Nick Boles as one of his best weapons. Where I have gone in my work in the National Trust, and where the ‘rule of Boles’ has applied, there aren’t many Tory voters left.” He wonders aloud why the Trust was not given a greater say over the reforms, “There are so many things we could have done if we had been consulted. We had a complete raft of things we could have done. No interest shown at all.

“Chancellor George Osborne and Nick Boles wanted to do what the developers wanted and they thought that developers were jobs and growth; it was as naive as that. We are still picking up the pieces.” Sir Simon says the tax system could be altered to redress the balance and encourage developers to build on brownfield sites. He questions why builders have to pay 20 per cent VAT when they convert factories into flats, but newbuild sites are VAT-free. He says: “I am absolutely in no doubt that developed Britain could house all the new people apparently needing housing quite easily if the tax breaks, the planning and the will was there. There is no need to build on the countryside.”

Sir Simon also wants to bring back the rates system to replace council tax. “Personally I would go back to the rates and tax people by the amount of land and housing they are using, which I think is fair.” Sir Simon — who has long campaigned for planners to classify and grade rural land according to its worth — wants the NPPF to be redrawn to write in protections of rural views from wind farms and other rural monstrosities. Greater protections for countryside views “should be a part of the planning guidance. I honestly don’t think it was written by anybody who looks at a landscaped view.

“I read that document [the NPPF] through and I thought ‘did these people just go on holiday in Italy. Did they ever look at the English countryside? There was simply no sense of the aesthetic pleasure that people take from looking at views in the country.”

Sir Simon, 70, who stands down as chairman in October, has no regrets about fighting his war on planning on behalf of the Trust but clearly frets that his battle may have been vain. “Planning to me was core to our mission. We just had to say something about that because it was just such a real threat to everything. The Government would apparently be happy if all the villages of south-east England joined up.”

He says that he “genuinely does not think the British people want that”, and points out: “They have not been asked.”

*Christopher Hope, Senior Political Correspondent  
Telegraph 28 March 2014*

### **Barn conversions will soon be easier**

Nick Bowles has been planning minister for 18 months. He has already threatened to allow more building on the Green Belt and in National Parks, despite the Government’s commitment to “localism”. In March, he promised to make it easier for farmers to convert redundant outbuildings into homes and has been accused of sparking a rural construction boom and encouraging second homes.

The new rules came into effect on 6 April and allow farm owners to convert 450 sq metres of redundant or underused agricultural buildings for residential use, without having to obtain planning permission. The space can be used to create up to three homes. However, the change has failed to include a clause requiring such properties to be used as primary residences, so many of them could become second homes.

At present, this deregulation will not apply to National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Conservation Areas, in which areas planning permission will still be required. Nevertheless, we believe that there will be a strong presumption for Local Planning Authorities to grant permissions there. Farmers or developers must still gain “approval” for the design, but Councils will not be able to reject the principle of conversion.

Developers don’t have to be farmers to take advantage of this deregulation, but the buildings must have been in agricultural use on 20 March 2013. If the property hasn’t been a working farm for more than a year, it won’t qualify.

The Department for Communities & Local Government has no estimate for the number of buildings that are suitable for conversion. However, according to the Historic Farm Buildings Survey, carried out in 1986, there were 600,000 farm buildings built before 1900 and 1.8m built since then.

In my opinion, this is yet another example of ill-thought out planning changes that will lead to the erosion of the traditional character of our countryside, without making any significant contribution to affordable housing needs.

### **Too few communities using powers to protect their local assets. Civic Voice to launch year long campaign to encourage Listing of local assets**

*This news item from Civic Voice is particularly appropriate for the Lizard Trust at the moment. Our on-going survey of our area’s roadside heritage assets continues to add items to our database, albeit at a slower pace than hoped for, due to a general lack of volunteers. It is particularly important that we give priority to historic finger posts, telephone kiosks and post-boxes. If you want to get involved, or refresh your interest, to record such items in your area, please contact me.*

*David Richardson*

Griff Rhys Jones, President of Civic Voice has today said, “For far too long, people have assumed that they don’t have any voice in their locality. This is wrong. You do have a voice, but you have to use it. The Government has introduced the Localism Act and yet figures released show that less than 1000 communities have utilised the powers available to List local community assets. Civic Voice wants to change this”.



The Listed historic finger post in Skyburriowe Lane before restoration

Responding to a Parliamentary Question on 13 March, Stephen Williams MP said, "We estimate that from February of this year over 900 assets have been Listed across England". Griff added, "Whether it is a heritage asset or community asset, you should get it Listed. It can make a difference and that is why Civic Voice is launching a year-long project to inspire communities across England to give buildings greater protection. We will be publishing case studies, holding events and mobilising communities to show people that they can have a voice in their local area". Events are planned as part of the Localism Alliance initially in Bristol, Wakefield and London

Communities Minister, Stephen Williams MP said, "Communities across the country are developing neighbourhood plans, using the Community Right to Bid to protect their important local pub or shop and seeking to keep money in their communities through the use of community shares. They are doing their bit to make where they live a better place.

*Civic Voice. March 2014*

#### A Cornish Easter

Pask lowen	<i>Happy Easter</i>
Oy	<i>Egg</i>
Conyn	<i>Rabbit</i>
Gwenten/ gwaynten	<i>Spring</i>
Mabyar	<i>Chick</i>
Nowydh bywnans	<i>New life</i>
Blejan	<i>Flower</i>
Choklet	<i>Chocolate</i>

*Lynda Blackman*

#### Mint

As I have just returned from a trip to New Zealand, I really fancied cooking some spring lamb with a traditional mint sauce. But Mary Berry did just this on the TV, so this has spurred me on to find out about mint and its uses and seek a new recipe.

The mint family is well known by us all but, botanically, is not clearly distinct as there are many hybrids and cultivars. They are an aromatic and perennial herb growing in most conditions, but preferring wetter and damper environments. They grow from 10 -120 cms tall and spread over wide areas and are generally considered invasive. The popular varieties we all know are garden, peppermint, spearmint, water and apple mint but the list goes on. They have many uses both culinary and medicinal. Medicinally, the herb and its menthol oil are used for a variety of conditions related to digestion and congestion.

The name derives from the nymph Menthe who was turned into a plant by the goddess Perserpina when she found out that Pluto was in love with her. The Greeks used it as a cleaning agent and added it to their baths to stimulate their bodies. The Romans used it in cooking and as an aid to digestion.

I love traditional mint sauce with lamb à la Mary Berry but also in salads and the recipe or amalgamation of ingredients I have included here combine both.

#### Lamb, Mint and Feta salad with flatbread

Ingredients (the quantities are for you to decide depending on numbers, appetite etc):

*Flat breads – I make my own and if you want the recipe please email me (lyndablackman@yahoo.co.uk);*

*Cooked lamb – I used leftover roast lamb but any cooked lamb will do;*

*Feta cheese;*

*Handful of washed fresh mint (tbsp. of finely chopped for the dressing and the rest torn for the salad);*

*½ tsp Ground coriander;*

*1 tbsp Balsamic vinegar;*

*Squeeze of lemon juice;*

*Garlic to taste – crushed and mashed with a little rock salt (optional);*

*4 tbsps Olive oil;*

*Green salad leaves – I like rocket and spinach;*

*Cucumber;*

*Cherry or cherry plum tomatoes;*

*Seasoning.*

#### Method:

- 1 Make the dressing by mixing the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, crushed garlic, seasoning and a tbsp. mint leaves and 1/2 tsp ground coriander;
- 2 Prepare the lamb – slice into thin strips preferably a little pink and juicy;
- 3 Halve the cherry tomatoes, slice the cucumber;
- 4 Mix the salad leaves and washed mint leaves on a platter and dot with the tomatoes and cucumber slices;
- 5 Crumble over some feta cheese and arrange sliced lamb on top and season to taste;
- 6 Warm or toast some flatbreads and cut into pieces and arrange round the edge of the platter;
- 7 Pour over the dressing just before serving and mix gently into the leaves, feta and mint.

*Lynda Blackman*

#### Members of the Committee

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