

## Climate Change

### The End of the Line for the HGV?



CPRE, both nationally and here in Hertfordshire is concerned about climate change. The countryside is great at absorbing our carbon dioxide emissions and we campaign to protect it because of this and because of its other benefits.

Roads criss-cross the countryside and nearly all of the traffic on these emit CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases.

The heaviest trucks on our roads weigh 44 tonnes. Known as Heavy Goods Vehicles, they all have diesel engines. Their emissions cause not only climate change but also poor air quality with all of the chest infections and breathing problems associated.

A recent report on BBC London's news was about a school in the east of the capital where an on-line retailer was building a distribution depot next door. The staff, the children and their parents were protesting about this because of the environmental risks associated with all of the vehicle movements that there would be going in and out of the depot.

Whilst there are electric-powered lightweight vans and other commercial vehicles available, there are no HGVs. Studies are underway to come up with a plan for how it will be possible to develop environmentally friendly HGVs. However, to date, no one has published any definite proposals.

To meet the UK target of carbon neutrality by 2050, a lot of the way in which we live our lives has to change. Surely, the on-line retailers and other HGV users can change as well and do away with all diesel and petrol powered vehicles, and use only electrical vans and trucks. Nowhere can this be more important than in our towns and cities, especially near schools. The youngsters of today will be the grown-ups around in 2050 and will be able to look back to see who did what they should and who did not.