



Our year

A review of 2018-19



The
countryside
charity



Our year

Crispin Truman reflects on the past 12 months and looks to our future

I'm proud to introduce the highlights of another successful year for CPRE, the countryside charity. The scale and scope of the work recorded within these pages shows how much the love of the countryside has inspired a huge number of you – volunteers, staff and supporters – to work to promote, enhance and protect it. I hope it inspires you as much as it does me to read about our range of work: from counting stars to clearing litter, and from lobbying ministers to creating dynamic coalitions of like-minded groups.

CPRE has always focused on creating positive solutions that benefit the whole country as well as the countryside. We were formed to make sure decisions over our land respect the needs of people and the environment.

We want to refocus on that principle, and remain passionate about our founders' belief that the countryside belongs to everyone, and must be accessible to everyone.

It's the belief that drove CPRE's historic campaigns for National Parks and Green Belts, and drives our continued work to promote them as an incredible resource for our enjoyment and inspiration.

But we don't just work for our most celebrated landscapes. It is the countryside on our doorsteps that provides so much of England's unique beauty and character. We need the whole of the countryside to prosper – for all our inspiration and personal wellbeing, and the health of our communities and their environment.

Because climate change poses the greatest threat to the countryside, I'm particularly proud that CPRE has taken the lead on challenging new rules on fracking, promoting soil-friendly farming, and calling for sustainable development that recycles land. After all, we want to see future generations benefit from a thriving, beautiful countryside that is valued and enjoyed by all.



Crispin Truman OBE
Chief Executive

A year to remember: highlights of 2018-19

This year saw us forming new partnerships and reaching many more supporters as we asked people to join us in celebrating the countryside

Star Count 2019 ►

Star-filled skies are one of the most magical experiences the countryside can offer, and this year we encouraged a record number of you to take part in identifying the best places to enjoy a night-time skyscape.

The data gathered during this year's count helped us create an interactive map that will support us in our efforts to make a beautiful dark sky accessible to more people.



◄ A countryside for all

CPRE President Emma Bridgewater hosted a special event to celebrate women's experiences of the countryside. BBC Springwatch presenter Gillian Burke spoke of the need to give children 'the time and space to roam unsupervised', V&A senior curator Edwina Ehrman echoed the importance of 'early experiences of nature', and Shelter's Polly Neate called for social housing to benefit 'the women who suffer most from rural poverty.'



◀ National Parks at 70

Along with many partner organisations, we celebrated 70 years of National Parks at Castleton in the Peak District. We were part of re-enactments of key moments leading to the National Parks Act 1949, all filmed by the BBC's Countryfile.

We're proud of our role in this revolutionary piece of legislation, which followed 20 years of CPRE campaigning for our iconic landscapes to be secured for the enjoyment of all.

CPRE's Green Clean ▶

It was inspiring to see so many of you join 35 litter-picking events around the country and to introduce you to our mobile 'reverse vending machine' – an easy way to exchange empties for cash as part of a deposit return system.

Such schemes have increased recycling rates to more than 90% elsewhere in Europe, and our Green Clean provided more evidence of the need for an 'all-in' UK system that captures every container. Our events removed more than 11,000 bottles and cans from countryside and green spaces – including Telford Town Park, where CPRE Shropshire volunteers led the clean-up.



Connecting people and countryside

We believe that everybody should be able to access and enjoy the countryside, and this year you've helped us create those opportunities

Discovering the beauty of the Bryson Line



Many of you cheered on a team of charity walkers on their epic trek through the length of the country, introducing them and the wider public to the beauty and variety of the English countryside.

We were delighted to benefit from the 569-mile effort by Tanager Wealth Management, along a route inspired by our former President Bill Bryson – who even joined us for the final leg. The funds raised for CPRE will help us enhance local landscapes for even more people to enjoy.

Keeping 'the countryside next door'

Our Green Belts provide 30 million city-dwellers with their nearest countryside, creating a vital green lung and opportunities to stretch our legs. Thank you to those of you who helped us achieve changes to national policies. Now all alternatives must be considered before Green Belts can be built on, while any proposed alterations to their boundaries must now be 'fully evidenced and justified'.

And because we want even more people to benefit from easy access to open spaces, we're calling for the creation of new Green Belts where there's an urgent need to stop the spread of unnecessary development – with CPRE Hampshire winning local support for a South Hampshire Green Belt.

Promoting access to our finest landscapes

You helped us fund landmark research submitted to the government's independent review of National Parks, showing that more than a third of England's population struggle to access the joys of these inspirational places. With socio-economic status and a lack of public transport a major factor, CPRE is pressing for investment to help all communities share in these national assets.

Following our calls for these landscapes to be on the national curriculum, CPRE president Emma Bridgewater signed an open letter to environment secretary Michael Gove demanding a government commitment 'to offer all children, regardless of where they live, the opportunity to visit a National Park while at school'.

'CPRE is an organisation that has worked tirelessly to protect the landscapes along the route for the enjoyment of all.'

Bill Bryson, former CPRE President



£26,636

Funding raised for CPRE's landscape enhancement projects by the Bryson Line walk

30 million

The number of English citizens whose most accessible countryside is within one of our 14 Green Belts

36%

Proportion of the population without easy access to our 10 National Parks and 34 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Promoting rural life

We want to see our rural communities thrive and this year has seen some real progress made

Towards a litter-free countryside

Our calls for an end to plastic straws, drinks stirrers and cotton buds were heard, with a ban coming into force in 2020. But we continue to press for all single-use items to be phased out, whatever the material.

After you helped us convince the government to introduce a deposit return system (DRS) for drinks containers, we're now calling for containers of every size and material to be included. As well as increasing recycling, our polling found that DRS could raise £1bn a year for good causes, from people donating their deposits. Meanwhile, our successful push for a plastic bag charge has reduced usage by 86% and led to a government consultation on extending the scheme.

Farming for a greener future



The first major Agriculture Bill for 70 years was built around our recommendation that farmers should be recognised and more fairly rewarded for the conservation work that is vital for the character of our countryside. Future payments will now enhance landscapes, increase biodiversity and help our smaller farmers survive. But we continue to call for greater protection for the soil that is fundamental to the health of our countryside and wider environment.

Life in our villages and market towns

The countryside is often forgotten when it comes to housing policy. Your support enabled us join with Shelter to convince the government to revise planning rules: developers can no longer use the high cost of land to avoid delivering affordable homes – a brilliant outcome.

CPRE calls for greater investment in social housing also helped win government pledges to support 'a new generation of council housing'. We're now stepping up our campaign for rural councils to be given powers to buy land for social homes, and a fair share of funding with which to build them. Such moves will help keep our villages thriving for generations to come.

'A deposit return system could help build community pride, inspire love for local green spaces, and encourage young people to strive for more big changes.'

Emma Bridgewater MBE, CPRE President



90%

Recycling rates for drinks containers that could be achieved with CPRE's proposed 'all-in' deposit return system

20 million tonnes

The amount of UK soil sent to landfill each year as a result of the inappropriate development highlighted by CPRE

173,584

Rural families on social housing waiting lists who will benefit from more affordable homes in the countryside

Empowering communities

You worked with us to make sure the government heard our views on the countryside and local democracy

Giving a voice to the heart of England

When the government announced its support for a massive ‘development Arc’ between Oxford and Cambridge, we helped local groups draw attention to this ‘devastating blow for local democracy and the countryside’.

Highlighting the lack of a formal public consultation, we polled 1,500 local residents and found that the majority do not support the scale of house building proposed. 82% believed that the social housing needs of local people must take priority, but with just 18% of the affordable homes needed locally set to be met by the plans, we will continue to push for a genuine consultation.

Supporting urban regeneration

You helped us lobby the government to create planning guidelines that place a greater emphasis on reusing ‘brownfield’ land for housing. And we’ve been helping communities identify wasted spaces for regeneration through the official brownfield registers – reintroduced after a CPRE campaign – which now hold enough sites for over a million homes.

Two-thirds of these sites are ready to build on immediately, and a reliable supply of brownfield is coming through all of the time. But with building on derelict land at a five-year low, CPRE is calling for a ‘brownfield first’ policy that will prevent the needless loss of countryside.

Harnessing opinion on fracking



More than 200,000 of you signed CPRE’s ‘Don’t fast-track fracking’ petition calling for local authorities to retain the power to oppose fracking applications. The campaign was supported by more than 20 local authorities after you sent 12,000 letters to council leaders.

By May 2019, the government’s own public attitudes survey had revealed that, in the previous 12 months, public opposition to fracking had increased by a quarter to 40%, while support had fallen by a third to just 12%.

‘Local people must be given the opportunity to express their views on the design and affordability of new housing, and safeguard this precious heritage for future generations.’

Sir Andrew Motion, CPRE Vice President



270km²

The amount of countryside – an area the size of Birmingham – threatened by 1m homes in the Oxford-Cambridge ‘Arc’

120,000

The number of homes that could be built on the new sites CPRE helped add to brownfield registers in 2018

13%

The proportion of people who feel the government is listening to the public on fracking, according to CPRE’s poll

Our year in numbers

You helped us work with more people
than ever in 2018-19. We'll let the numbers
speak for themselves:

Campaigning together

2,332 

The record-breaking number of citizen-scientist stargazers who took part in our 2019 Star Count

200,096 

Signatures on CPRE's 'Don't fast-track fracking' petition

543 

Submissions of your ideas on how to make a deposit return system work for rural areas and people with limited mobility

11,949 

Emails you sent to local councils rejecting government plans to fast-track fracking. Another 6,197 of you called for earthquake regulations to be retained

21,326 

Those of you who signed up to support our call for an 'all-in' deposit return scheme to end drinks container litter

11,212 

Drinks containers collected by volunteers on CPRE's Green Cleans

2 million 

Additional government funding for the building of social homes following CPRE's demands for investment

19 

Environmental charities and campaign groups who signed CPRE's open letter demanding that the government drops its plans to fast-track fracking

Access to countryside



232 acres

Section of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty near Canterbury, almost a square kilometre, protected from inappropriate development after CPRE Kent highlighted the importance of its network of public paths to local people



4 acres

Size of the Radbrook Fields wildflower meadow, equivalent to two football pitches, saved after CPRE Shropshire helped local people campaign to keep this popular green space



1,294 acres

Amount of tranquil countryside, half the size of Great Yarmouth, spared after CPRE Norfolk's campaign helped persuade councillors that a proposed new town would be unsustainable



6,165 acres

Amount of Green Belt land, equivalent to a quarter of the size of Bury, secured for the people of Manchester, thanks to CPRE Lancashire's efforts

Research

£1 billion

The annual funds that could be raised for local charities from a deposit return system on drink containers – based on a CPRE survey which found 20% of people would always donate their deposits to charity



130 years

Time it would take to house those on the social housing waiting lists in rural areas at the current rate of building. Last year, just 1,336 homes for social rent were built in rural councils despite 173,584 families needing homes



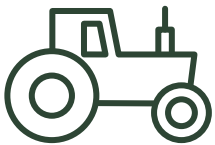
36%

Proportion of England's population unable to access any National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty because of insufficient or unaffordable public transport



1,580km² of farmland

The area, based on current annual rates, that will be lost to development within a decade. This is the same size as Greater London



2 trillion

Expected global consumption of single-use drinks containers in 2019. In the UK alone, that's more than 50,000 a minute



Over 1 million

The number of homes that could be built on previously developed land according to new brownfield registers introduced after a CPRE campaign





Funding and finance in 2018

£4.7m

Our total income, thanks to our loyal supporters and fantastically generous legacy donors

£46,361

Online income received

£5.5m

Unrestricted liquid reserves at the end of 2018. The overall level of reserves is within the range set by the Trustees (currently £2.7m – £5.6m), and is set aside to fund working capital requirements, the risks in income fluctuations, an allowance for unplanned expenditure, and limited funding for key strategic investments

£356,000

Amount reclaimed in tax thanks to our supporters completing Gift Aid forms

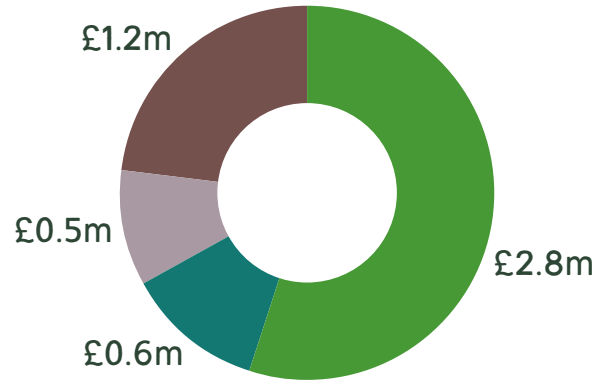
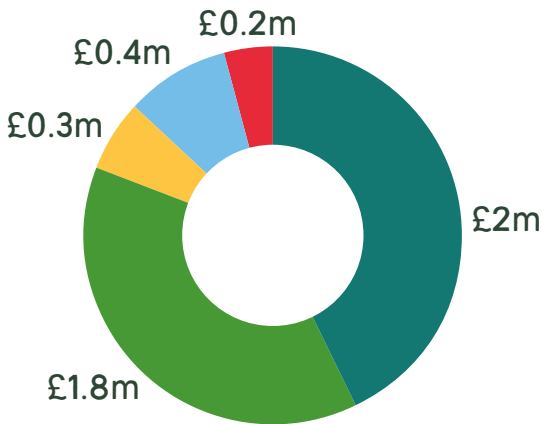
£596,000

Funds shared with local groups to support their communities

Financial summary 2018

Our total income
£4.7m

Our total expenditure
£5.1m



- Legacies
- Membership and regular donations
- Charitable trusts and companies
- Appeals
- Other

- Campaigning, communications and other charitable activities
- Support to county and regional groups from membership subscriptions
- Membership services
- Raising funds

Working with communities

Promoting the countryside



Celebrating local character

CPRE Oxfordshire has inspired communities to champion their local countryside. A ‘We love rural Oxfordshire’ grant scheme was launched to fund short films celebrating the character, heritage or landscape of rural places that people are keen to protect. Two films have been launched so far, telling the story of the gradual growth of Bampton and Culham – historic villages facing large-scale development.



Supporting local shops

CPRE Somerset celebrated life in the countryside with a ‘Best Somerset Village Shop’ competition designed to increase support for these community hubs. Judges rewarded Spaxton Community Stores and their team of hardworking volunteers for ploughing back profits into community projects and stocking local produce.

Promoting rural heritage

CPRE Devon celebrated the county’s unique character by sponsoring ‘The Devon Orchards Book’ to highlight the diversity of threatened local apple varieties. The group also organises a ‘Devon’s Best Churchyard’ competition, with judge Penny Mills explaining: ‘Churchyards are a sanctuary



for people and wildlife in an ever-changing landscape. They are unique and special places and we thank everybody who looks after them.’



Discovering green spaces

To promote the benefits of urban parks and open spaces, **CPRE London** joined the London Friends of Green Spaces Network to launch the ‘#GoParksLondon’ challenge. Producing a handy map, the campaign encouraged people to seek out lesser-known parks and take part in events from community picnics to butterfly surveys.

Here are some examples of the partnerships that have brought positive results for countryside and communities in 2018-19

Enhancing the countryside



Inspiring the next generation

CPRE Dorset volunteers inspired young anti-waste activists with a presentation on CPRE's Green Clean to Damers First School in Poundbury. The school is aiming to become litter-free and their passion enabled CPRE to set up a meeting with environment secretary Michael Gove. Pupils presented the secretary of

state with their hopes for a deposit return system, and headteacher Catherine Smith said: 'Working alongside CPRE has been an invaluable experience ... providing the children with an ideal opportunity to see democracy in action, for a cause they truly understand and feel passionate about.'



Improving our landscapes

Friends of the Lake District, who represent CPRE in Cumbria, organised a successful 'Fell Care Day' at Duddon to help enhance this special part of the National Park. A total of 91 keen conservationists planted 900 trees, cleared 16km of upland paths and restored dry stone walls.



Planting for the future

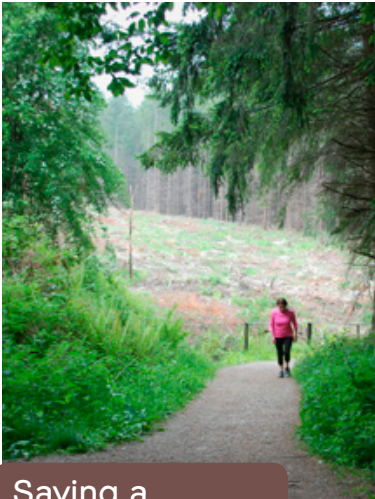
The Wirral Society, who represent **CPRE Cheshire** in the area, supported a special hedgelaying and tree-planting day in Birkenhead, where pupils from Woodchurch High School learned traditional skills while discovering their closest countryside. The newly-laid hedge marks the boundary of the Green Belt.

Protecting the countryside



Defending beauty

Our campaigners welcomed the decision to rule out drilling for oil in the heart of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We had long been partners with the Leith Hill Action Group, who praised ‘our colleagues in **CPRE Surrey** who have been steadfast in their support for us and their strong opposition to the plans.’



Saving a tranquil habitat

Volunteers from **Shropshire** and **Herefordshire CPREs** teamed up with a local action group to protect a peaceful spot near Ludlow from plans for 68 holiday houses and commercial facilities. Campaigners argued that Mortimer Forest’s beautiful wildlife habitat would have been damaged by a busy holiday park, convincing councillors to reject the plans.

Saying ‘No’ to Fracking

CPRE Lancashire campaigners worked alongside Friends of the Earth to represent community concerns about proposed fracking at Roseacre Wood, near Blackpool – and won. CPRE supported local people like Barbara Richardson (right) in warning about heavy traffic on local lanes and other negative impacts.



Protecting a home for nature

After a 10-year joint effort by **CPRE North Yorkshire** and the Save Our Craven Countryside group, an application for a 79-acre holiday camp development on a special wildlife haven was finally refused in March 2019. CPRE campaigners had argued that the Hellfield Flashes – natural lakes that occur after rainfall on fields – are vital for our visiting birds such as northern lapwings and eurasian wigeons.

Celebrating rural initiatives

Our county CPREs' prestigious awards continue to showcase the projects that are helping our countryside thrive



Championing affordable housing

CPRE Gloucestershire want their Rural Excellence Awards to inspire partnerships between councils, communities and builders, by showing that well-designed affordable homes can create vibrant villages and enhance local character. The Kings Lodge

development in Cinderford provided 32 energy efficient and affordable homes on a brownfield site (left), while Whittington Close in St Briavels benefited from a 100% affordable scheme led by the parish council and built in the local style.

Restoring green spaces for wildlife and people

CPRE Bedfordshire awarded our highest accolade – the CPRE Mark – to volunteers committed to improving biodiversity and access at a restored sand quarry outside Leighton Buzzard. The Friends of Tiddenfoot Waterside Park reclaimed a lost footpath, restored grassland habitats, installed a bird hide and engaged with youth groups.



Saving energy and seeing stars

With roads a major source of light pollution across England, **CPRE Isle of Wight's** annual Good Lighting Awards showcased Island Roads' upgrade to LED lighting. The switch is saving energy and assisting the CPRE bid to have the southern part of the island designated as an International Dark Sky Park.



Encouraging engagement with nature

CPRE Berkshire's Dorothy Morley Conservation Award aims to increase children's awareness of nature, and this year rewarded two urban schools for their wildlife gardening. The £500 runner-up prize will allow St Bernard's in Slough to establish a new conservation area around the school, while winners New Town Primary in Reading received £1,000 to grow more flowers for pollinators, and fruit and veg to eat.

Thank you

Our amazing supporters are essential for our work with people and the countryside. Your generosity means we'll continue to work to enhance, promote and protect the countryside now and for future generations. Thank you.

We're grateful to the CPRE supporters who remembered us in their Wills. Their contribution to CPRE is tremendous; we simply couldn't have achieved what we have without their help.

Mrs J G Akhurst	Mr M J D'Alessandro	Mr A B Gray	Mrs G M Marr	Ms S Stead
Miss M M Armitage	Mrs A Dean	Mrs M M Harris	Mr T Micklem	The Rev. Canon M
Mrs P Barr	Dr L E Drain	Mr H Hughes	Miss P Mure	Swindlehurst
Miss P J Bathurst	Miss L Elms	Ms Hunt	Mr J C Osborne	Mrs J Taylor
Miss J A Bayes	Dr S Forsyth	Miss V John	Mr H Owen	Mrs M Thompson
Mr E Bean	Major Fraser	Dr E Jones	Mrs V Pawlyn	Mr & Mrs J Tuck
Mr William A Bolton	Miss P M French	Mr J Kidson	Mrs K Penney	Mrs B Vaughan
Mr D Bratcher	Mr M Fromm	Ms J M Lennard	Ms V Prosser	Mr H B J Watson
Mr M R Brewer	Mrs I M Gale	Mr J C Lester	Mrs J H Ream	Miss A C Western
Miss E Brown	Dr G Gandy	Mrs L L MacKenzie-Calder	Mrs B Richmond	Mrs A N Wheatley
Miss M K Burrows	Mr I George	Mr A MacPherson	Mr J Schofield	Mrs White
Ms J D Cartwright	Mrs B Gillet	Mrs J K Manwaring	Mr R Smith	Miss J Williams
Mrs P E Cartwright	Mrs D Glynn	Mrs B M Marotta	Mr R K Starling	Miss J M Young

Thanks to everyone who supported our campaign work this year, including our anonymous donors. We've been able to make incredible progress – and that's thanks to you.

Mrs Acloque	Mr W M Bryson	Miss L Glazebrook	Mr Colin McCorquodale	Mr T Sloan
Mr & Mrs T Adburgham	Mr M F B Buchanan	Mrs M D Hallatt	Ms P McIntyre	Mr H R W Smith
Sir Rudolph Agnew	Mrs P M Buckley	Mr & Mrs Hastings	Mrs D Moggach	Mr & Mrs K Storey
Mrs S G Alexander	Dr & Mrs H Cecil	Mr J Hayes	Miss J E Nicholson	Mr R E Thomson
Mrs J K A Atkins	Mrs M Clark	Mr R Healey	Mrs S M Palmer	Mr & Mrs I Wallace
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Mr J Bell	Mr D Crook	Mrs F E H Hunkin	Miss E J Reis	Mr H Webb
Sir Quentin Blake	Ms M de Botton	Mrs P M Jenkins	Mr M L Reynolds	Mrs P Williams
Mr J Boden	Mr W J Edwards	Mr E P Lawrence	Mr D M Salisbury	Mr J Woodnutt
Mrs A M Bonsor	G G Fane	Miss D H Lockhart	Mr E Schlaikjer	Mrs M E Work
Miss A Brett	Mrs P Gale	Mrs M A Mallender	Miss S Shields	Mrs V Wormsley

We appreciate the support of all the trusts and companies who generously supported CPRE this year.

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The Hon M L Astor's Charitable Trust	Miss Hanson's Charitable Trust	The Scouloudi Foundation
Bearrem Charitable Trust	The Percy Hedley 1990 Charitable Trust	B A Segal Charitable Trust
The Amelia Chadwick Trust	The Reginald and Edna Hill Foundation	Seven Helpers
The Leonard Chadwick Charitable Trust	The Henry C Hoare Charitable Trust	ShareGift
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The Corn Mill Trust	The Loveday Charitable Trust	The Derek and Clare Stevens Trust
The Dingwall Trust	The Martineau Family Charity	John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust
The Dovehouse Trust	The Millichope Foundation	Tanner Trust
The Ecology Trust	The Peacock Charitable Trust	The Tolkien Trust
The Essex Trust	A D Power Will Trust	The Underwood Trust
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	Raphael Trust	Martin Wills Wildlife Maintenance Trust
Forty One Trust	K S Richer Will Trust	Sir Donald and Lady Edna Wilson Charitable Trust

Looking forward

With Su Sayer CBE

Chair of CPRE, the countryside charity

2018-19 has been a remarkable year, both for the benefit to the countryside shown in the preceding pages, and for the development of a new strategic direction and brand that will help CPRE attract a wider range of supporters.

The consultation we've undertaken has shown that people want to learn more about the positive benefits of the countryside, and CPRE's ideas to improve it. That is why we must give our efforts to promote and enhance the countryside as much emphasis as our work to protect it.

Our ambitious new strategic plan aims to engage a million people in CPRE campaigns and activities before we reach our

centenary in 2026. With your support for a countryside for all, we will make CPRE a more resilient and effective organisation – and allow our outstanding volunteer network to help even more local communities, and improve local environments.

With more communities and partners on board, we will work towards a sustainable future for rural life, helping to deliver progress on affordable housing, rural transport, farming and the rural economy. But at the heart of our new strategy remains our ambition that people feel connected to the countryside, so that far more of us enjoy, understand and value it – particularly those who don't currently

benefit from its inspirational beauty and tranquillity. In strengthening CPRE's local groups, we will be able to build on their grassroots experience of connecting with communities, and expand many of their excellent projects.

By achieving these strategic aims, we will help make the countryside more prominent in the minds of decision makers, and gain even more traction for CPRE's campaigns. But we can't achieve this on our own. Please join us at **cpre.org.uk** and help us create a thriving countryside that provides us with the landscapes, wildlife, wellbeing and environment we want to pass on to future generations.



CPRE The countryside charity

CPRE is the countryside charity that campaigns to promote, enhance and protect the countryside for everyone's benefit, wherever they live; today and for generations to come.

With a local CPRE in every county, we work with communities, businesses and government to find positive and lasting ways to help the countryside thrive.

What we do

We connect people with the countryside so that everyone can benefit from and value it.

We promote rural life to ensure the countryside and its communities can thrive.

We empower communities to improve and protect their local environment.

Through all our work we look at the role of our countryside in tackling the **climate emergency**, including seeking ways to increase resilience and reduce impact.

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