



Our year

A review of 2021-22



The
countryside
charity



Introducing CPRE, the countryside charity

CPRE continues to make the case that we don't need to sacrifice our countryside in order to meet the big challenges the country faces. We all want to see more homes and cheaper energy, but solving the housing or energy crises shouldn't mean building all over our productive farmland and treasured green spaces – the very assets we rely on for our food security, biodiversity and health. Climate change – the greatest crisis of all – becomes even harder to stop if we reduce the amount of land that can store carbon, absorb floodwater and nourish new hedgerows.

CPRE's exhaustive research proves that many of the homes we need can be delivered by reusing derelict sites – making the most of existing infrastructure and reviving our struggling urban centres. Utilising the nation's commercial and industrial rooftops for solar panels would help power our economic recovery and generate energy right where it's needed. Both solutions are practical, sustainable and cost-effective – and will help save the countryside that's become a lifeline to millions in the past two years.

Where development is needed, local communities should be at the heart of that process. They must also gain something that compensates for any loss of green space – whether it's affordable housing to keep the village alive, or small-scale renewables to ease the rural cost-of-living burden. So I was delighted that after CPRE's two-year campaign for democratic decision-making, 2022's Queen's Speech pledged that 'the planning system will be reformed to give residents more involvement in local development'.

We've also managed to persuade the government to step back from plans to leave whole swathes of countryside wide open to the big housebuilders. We'll continue to work hard to ensure the final legislation leaves no loopholes that might allow ministers or commercial interests to override local decisions. Please help us give more people like you a say in protecting our environment and creating thriving communities. Be part of the countryside charity at cpre.org.uk/become-a-member



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Truman'.

Crispin Truman OBE
Chief Executive
CPRE The countryside charity



Tackling climate change

This year saw us engaging communities and decision-makers with our work to make countryside solutions central to resisting climate breakdown

Representing rural at COP26

Our delegation to the UN's Glasgow climate conference promoted the importance of England's countryside in solving this global emergency – including by protecting landscapes from damaging fossil fuel extraction and restoring our carbon-storing peatlands by 2030.

We also argued that more support for energy efficiency measures and community-led renewables could alleviate the cost-of-living crisis that is hitting rural households hardest. We therefore welcomed a central pledge of the government's energy security strategy, to 'accelerate energy efficiency deployment and phase out fossil fuel use'.

Highlighting hedgerows' potential

We launched a major campaign to show why hedgerows are essential for limiting climate change, thanks to their effectiveness in absorbing CO₂, screening air pollution and

preventing flooding. Our open letter to the government called for a 40% increase in the UK's hedgerow network by 2050, winning support from signatories including Greenpeace and the RSPB.

Environment secretary George Eustice MP welcomed CPRE's work to highlight hedgerows' 'ability to become champions of climate action', while our lobbying influenced the confirmation of a new funding scheme for 2023 – to 'pay farmers to plant more hedgerows and manage them sustainably'.

Renewables in the right places

We showed that the trend for imposing industrial-scale energy developments on valued countryside was generating needless public opposition to renewables. To prove that community-led schemes could be more popular, we ran a pilot project that helped three North Yorkshire villages identify appropriate sites for clean energy.

Meanwhile, our county groups helped local people defeat damaging schemes – including a solar installation on 23 acres of productive farmland at Tregorrick in Cornwall. We continue to highlight that food security and landscape concerns can be reduced by focusing investment on rooftop solar and offshore wind.

Planning to save energy

Our analysis of the 24 local plans adopted since 2019's Climate Change Act found that local authorities' carbon-reduction ambitions are being hampered by weak national policies. With the UK struggling to meet its legally binding target of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, we urged the government to ensure local plans insist on less energy-hungry development – including by making solar roof panels a requirement for new buildings.

We also called for an end to car-dependent housing, with a 'brownfield first' policy to help provide affordable homes on recycled land close to existing public transport.

Connecting people and countryside

We're promoting the importance of a welcoming and accessible countryside we can all be inspired to care for



Community conservation

Our Hedgerow Heroes project saw five of our county groups train local people in hedgerow surveying, laying and planting – resulting in more than 16 kilometres of restored habitat and hundreds of new conservation volunteers. We've been particularly pleased to see so many young people engaging with the project, with CPRE Hampshire's work on the Meyrick Estate visited by Brockenhurst Young Farmers, Sparsholt university students and children from Bransgore Primary School.

As well as learning about hedgerow management, the pupils were shown how to spot evidence of wildlife and identify plant species, before being helped to plant their own 45 metre hedge at the school. Thanks to our generous donors, we'll be rolling out the project to more counties – and inspiring more young people – in 2022-23.



Breaking down barriers

We were proud to publish 'Access to nature in the English countryside' – research commissioned from people of colour with lived experience of racism and restricted access to green spaces. Featuring thought-provoking contributions from the likes of journalist and academic Maxwell Ayamba and award-winning author Sarah Hussain, we're now using its findings to develop a project to make the countryside more welcoming for everyone.

We also showcased the positive side of rural diversity, with two inspirational stories for our 'We are the countryside' social media campaign. The widely shared films helped us spread a powerful message of inclusion, celebrating Victoria Ekpo's walking group for black women and Wilmer Carcamo's creation of a small business in rural Northumberland.



Learning in nature

Thanks to support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we ran a successful pilot project that introduced two disadvantaged communities to the joys of the countryside. CPRE London joined forces with the Magpie Project to give families living in temporary accommodation a series of day trips to the Green Belt. The under-fives and their mums were able to enjoy a rare chance to relax, thanks to the natural surroundings provided by Epping Forest.

Meanwhile, CPRE Lancashire worked with Incredible Edible Knowsley to help pupils from six local primary schools – along with young adults with learning disabilities – discover the advantages of local food and enjoy the wellbeing benefits of local green spaces.



‘The CPRE “We are the countryside” campaign did more than tell a story, it called for us to look around us and to articulate who we are ... and who we are in the space in which we exist. It asked us to examine our place within our non-human world and its relationship to us.’

Victoria Ekpo, poet, academic and co-founder of the FootStepsNW walking group

Promoting rural life

We're working towards a sustainable vision for countryside communities built on affordable housing, thriving local economies and reliable services



Finding family homes

CPRE found a likely cause of rapidly rising rural housing costs when our research identified a 1,000% increase in short-term lets between 2015-2021. At a time when 176,000 families in the countryside are stuck on social housing waiting lists, we showed that 148,000 homes are available to visitors – predominantly in rural holiday hotspots.

The major national media coverage of our research has increased pressure on the government to address our demands – for tighter controls over holiday lets and legislation requiring at least one genuinely affordable home for every market home built. We also called for higher council tax for second homes and welcomed some progress towards that, with the subsequent announcement of new powers to double council tax on homes left empty for a year.



The value of hedgerows

We published landmark research which found that achieving our target of a 40% increase in hedgerows by 2050 would support over 25,000 rural jobs. Furthermore, our Hedge Fund report found that for every £1 invested in hedgerow planting, as much as £3.92 of value could be generated in the wider economy.

Our analysis, commissioned from the independent Organic Research Centre, showed that the creation of new habitats would boost biodiversity linked to enhanced crop pollination and natural pest control, thus increasing yields while reducing pesticide use. The findings were endorsed by Lord Deben, chair of the UK's Climate Change Committee, who noted that 'the hard facts are that hedges contribute to profit as well as to wellbeing and CPRE is to be congratulated in putting the record straight'.



Keeping villages alive

Our report on young people in rural areas surveyed more than 1,000 16- to 25-year-olds to find out why so many feel forced to leave the countryside. It showed that infrequent and unreliable public transport, the chronic lack of affordable housing and feelings of isolation mean that only 43% of young people expect to stay in rural England beyond the next five years. Most worryingly of all, fewer than one in five (just 18%) felt a rural future looked bright.

We're using this new evidence to support our calls for the government to fund the regular bus services, reliable broadband and genuinely affordable homes that can help the countryside retain the young people it needs to thrive.



‘There is no way that I’ll be able to afford to stay in the village. It’s just really hurtful. I put quite a lot into the village and it sort of feels like I’m being pushed out. Level us up with urban areas. Living in rural areas shouldn’t mean being disconnected and left behind.’

Freya Davis, 18, CPRE survey respondent, Flore Parish Councillor and member of the Northamptonshire Youth Crime Commission

Shaping greener communities

We're campaigning for decisions over development to prioritise urban regeneration while protecting countryside and green spaces



Influencing government

After over a year of CPRE campaigning against damaging and undemocratic proposals designed to speed up new development, Conservative Party chairman Oliver Dowden used his 2021 conference speech to announce a government U-turn and promise 'additional safeguards ... to protect our towns, villages and precious countryside'.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill confirmed that ministers had heeded CPRE's calls to scrap planning changes that would have forced local authorities to allocate large areas of greenfield land for housing developments. Our influence was recognised at the prestigious PRCA Public Affairs Awards, where we beat off competition from the likes of Transport for London to claim the Planning Campaign of the Year.



Revitalising wasted land

For over 40 years, we've argued that prioritising previously developed sites for housing can help save our countryside for farming, wildlife and health. So it was encouraging that prime minister Boris Johnson adopted CPRE's position in October, declaring that 'the homes young families need' should go 'not on green fields ... but on brownfield sites'.

A government white paper on 'spreading prosperity' then mirrored our strategy for achieving that – through urban regeneration in neglected towns and cities in the north and midlands, facilitated by the fairer share of funding we'd called for. The investment pledge came shortly after CPRE launched our online Brownfield Land Toolkit, which helps communities identify more of the sites that we've shown could provide 1.2 million sustainable homes.



Empowering local people

We produced the first ever analysis of the impact of the Local Green Space designation, introduced in 2012 after CPRE had campaigned for powers to help people protect local character. We found the policy has allowed communities to protect over 6,000 valued places on account of their 'particular local significance' – meaning 30,000 acres of community space now enjoys Green Belt-level protection.

But with too many green oases remaining vulnerable to development, we're calling on national and local government to do more to promote and support the Local Green Space policy – including by encouraging applications for spaces that are important for climate adaptation or mitigation.



‘This was a powerful and memorable campaign which received solid support for its strong messaging and ultimately exposed the failings of the Planning White Paper – and certainly did get the government to think again.’

Public Relations and Communications Association
citation for CPRE’s award-winning planning campaign

Local action

Enhancing shared spaces



Living landscapes

CPRE Shropshire helped dozens of local people get to grips with the ancient art of hedgelaying in a series of autumn workshops. As well as helping to revitalise the

county's landscapes they forged new partnerships with farmers and young people – including the Shropshire Hills Young Rangers, who developed skills and confidence while enhancing the Acton Scott Estate.



Countryside care

CPRE Cumbria celebrated 10 years of their Fell Care Days in stunning sunshine for their November event at Haweswater. Fifty volunteers and Friends of the Lake District staff planted 150 juniper trees above Blea Water, while Fix the Fells volunteers carried out maintenance on 10km of upland paths. The team even found time to repair a dry stone wall and remove 1,000 tree guards for recycling.



Litter heroes

As part of Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean, **CPRE Hampshire** organised a summer event at the local

beauty spot of Farley Mount, with litter pickers as young as three joining in from the nearby parish of Hursley. Supported by contractor Idverde and staff from the Army Training Regiment, the group has held regular roadside litter picks throughout the year, engaging over 20 heroic volunteers who have made a real difference to the local environment.



Greening neighbourhoods

CPRE Sussex has helped neglected urban communities in and around Brighton plant over 100 trees as part of the Forgotten Places project run by Trees for Cities. Planting has taken place in four locations, engaging council staff, corporate sponsors, wildlife groups and local residents.

We supported our local network in their efforts to improve your countryside and green spaces. Here are just some of the highlights from 2021-22:

Promoting rural assets



Hitting the heights

Summer 2021 saw **CPRE Peak District and South Yorkshire** launch 'The Ethels' walking challenge, celebrating 95 local viewpoints in memory of their founder Ethel Haythornthwaite – a pioneer of Green Belts and National Parks. Spring 2022 saw Sheffield walker Dan Cunningham make news as the first to tick off the list – which then featured on Radio 4's Ramblings, before it was confirmed that Ethel's achievements would also be honoured with a Blue Plaque in the city.



A voice for nature

CPRE Norfolk continued to argue the case against the proposed Norwich Western Link Road, calling on the county council to heed their own scoping study's conclusion that it would damage the River Wensum's rare and protected habitat. In January 2022, CPRE Norfolk president Professor Tim O'Riordan joined actor Stephen Fry and environmentalist Chris Packham in urging a rethink of the scheme.



Improving access

To encourage people to explore their county's countryside, **CPRE Staffordshire** has been working to restore the neglected Staffordshire Way long distance footpath. An enthusiastic team of volunteers health-checked the route, reporting problems

and providing information on public transport and refreshment options. Our group then organised a special relay event, with local runners covering the whole 96 miles in 18 hours and generating great publicity for the path.

Protecting special places



Keeping the peace

CPRE Somerset came to the rescue of residents suffering from the noise and disturbance created by an illegal off-road motorcycling track, near Burrowbridge on the Somerset Levels. Our campaigners'

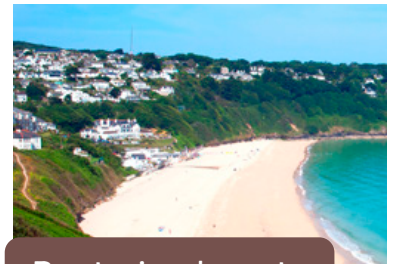
objection helped ensure the council did not grant retrospective planning permission, meaning the tranquillity of Burrow Mump – a historic hill and war memorial – has been restored to benefit local people and wildlife.



Saving green fields

CPRE Derbyshire celebrated the decision of Amber Valley Borough Council to reject a proposal for a 260-acre solar farm near Alfreton. This was followed by another success when the same developer

withdrew plans for a similar scheme in Shirland. In both cases, our campaigners represented public opinion in highlighting the value of the threatened countryside for wellbeing and wildlife.



Restoring beauty

CPRE Cornwall's determined campaigning resulted in a developer being ordered to restore a coastal landscape to its natural state. They successfully argued that a hotel had built four luxury lodges without planning permission, damaging the beauty of Carbis Bay and ignoring the protections of the Cornwall Local Plan.



Fighting for farmland

CPRE Wiltshire helped defeat an 86-acre science park development at Inlands Farm near Swindon. The planning inspector agreed with our volunteers that the plans would have a significant environmental impact on the area, cause a loss of farmland and damage the setting of the nearby North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Inspiring communities



Creating habitats

CPRE Oxfordshire welcomed environment secretary George Eustice to West Meadow, near Watlington, where the minister planted an oak tree within their newly created hedgerow. Our volunteers' efforts with the parish council and Wild Oxfordshire charity were praised by the minister, who said 'your commitment to the countryside and community is fantastic – we can all learn from what you have been doing here'.



The countryside next door

CPRE Lancashire's popular walking events continued to introduce people to the Green Belt countryside they work to protect. An autumn walk in the Wirral explored woodlands, moorlands and the coast with international students who'd made Liverpool their home for a year. Then, in January, our campaigners were proud to welcome the FootstepsNW walking group for women of colour, for a trip around Chorley's green gems.



A warm welcome

CPRE Northumberland worked with artist Henna Asikainen on an access project to connect some of society's most disadvantaged members – refugees and asylum seekers – with their adopted countryside. Twenty walkers, led by CPRE's Jeff Wild, completed a five-mile circular near Hadrian's Wall, enjoying the chance to discover the area's heritage and learn about local wildflowers.

Our year in numbers: Campaigning together



37,345 

The number of you who signed our petition to the environment secretary George Eustice, asking him to set a target to increase the hedgerow network by 40% by 2050. Our open letter to the government was signed by 14 leading environment and landscape organisations, including the National Trust and Wildlife Trusts.



285,754 

The members of the public who signed our joint petition with Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace opposing a new coal mine in Cumbria. CPRE campaigners joined concerned Whitehaven residents to hand in the petition, having given voice to their arguments about the mine's impact on the local landscape and global environment.



21 

The number of leading environmental and land use organisations that helped CPRE create six tests for government changes to the planning system. While the tests influenced planning clauses in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill for the better, we're calling for the final legislation to do still more to put people and nature first.



2,500 

The number of you who became citizen scientists for our annual Star Count. Your results showed that severe light pollution was experienced by 49% of you – down from a peak of 61% in 2020. We'll continue to encourage councils, businesses and residents to reduce unnecessary lighting – restoring our view of the stars while saving energy and helping wildlife.

You helped our campaigns reach more people than ever in 2021-22. We'll let the numbers speak for themselves:



11 

The passionate CPRE delegates at the COP26 climate change summit, appearing on BBC Breakfast to make the case that nature-based solutions could make a huge difference to carbon emissions. On 6 November, they joined in with 100,000 marchers on the Global Day of Action, along with CPRE staff and supporters in towns and cities across England.

420 

The size of the volunteer army recruited by CPRE Herefordshire to monitor water pollution in the River Wye. They provided scientists from Cardiff University with weekly data to help pinpoint the sources of contamination that have been harming the river's fish and other wildlife, gaining press and political support for stronger enforcement of polluting industries.



16 

Kilometres of hedgerows planted or restored by 600 new volunteers engaged by CPRE groups in Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Suffolk. Our Hedgerow Heroes pilot projects also saw 15 schools and two colleges learn about the importance of hedgerows for reducing the impact of climate change, improving biodiversity and enhancing landscapes.

50,000 

The number of rail journeys taken in the first 20 weeks of the Okehampton to Exeter passenger service – reopened after 49 years. Backed with evidence from our 2015 Rural Reconnections report, CPRE Devon had argued the line would benefit local people and businesses, and boost tourism, while reducing car traffic. Passenger capacity has now been doubled with an hourly service.

Spaces for nature



6 acres

The area of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB spared from 15 years of oil drilling, after CPRE supported the campaigning of local people. The Biscathorpe site was just metres from the River Bain – a nationally significant chalk stream habitat.



66 acres

The amount of wildlife-rich Green Belt saved from a car-dependent housing development, thanks to CPRE Peak District and South Yorkshire's defence of a Loxley Valley site vital for protected bat and bird species.



1,150 acres

The Swanscombe Peninsula land designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and saved from a theme park resort development thanks to CPRE Kent's campaigning. The peninsula can now remain an exceptional habitat for rare invertebrates.



95 acres

The size of Yelland Quay, saved from 250 luxury homes after CPRE Devon campaigned on behalf of local people. This tranquil and sensitive Taw Estuary location is surrounded by nature reserves and borders an SSSI and the North Devon AONB.

Research and advocacy

15,000

The number of families on social housing waiting lists in Cornwall – and the number of second homes in the county that could accommodate them, if not being marketed as holiday lets. Our research found a similar pattern in many rural areas, supporting our calls for short term lets to require planning permission.



202,626

Acres of land available to tenant farmers thanks to the council-owned farms that support 1,752 tenancies. With these numbers falling as the land is increasingly sold off, we called for sustained investment to ensure a net expansion of council farm estates, thus encouraging new farmers and local food production.



121 years

The length of time it would take to clear the rural social housing backlog. Our analysis found the demand for these homes was growing nearly six times faster than the rate of supply: 8,898 households were added to waiting lists in 88 rural local authority areas with just 1,453 social homes delivered.



£1.8bn

Funding to ‘unlock’ 160,000 new homes on previously developed ‘brownfield’ sites announced in the chancellor’s 2021 budget. We’re now working to ensure the government introduces a strong ‘brownfield first’ policy to maximise the delivery of affordable and sustainable homes while protecting the environment.



£3.6bn

The amount of funding for household insulation that CPRE and partners demanded to help households struggling with the costs of fossil fuels. Our coalition also urged the government to set aside £4.15bn by 2025 to aid the transition from gas heating to heat pumps.



13 million

The tonnes of carbon stored by the UK’s hedgerows – equating to a quarter of the farming sector’s annual emissions. We also highlighted that the UK’s 300,000-mile hedgerow network supports a range of species including over 1,500 insects, 600 plants, 65 birds and 20 mammals.





Funding and finance in 2021

£3.3m

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

£349,000

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

£594,000

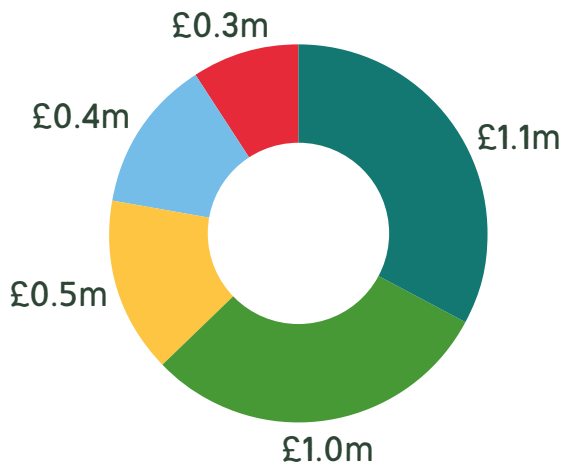
Funds shared with local groups to support their communities.

£2m

Unrestricted free reserves at the end of 2021, providing our charity with stability and sustainability during these uncertain times for society and the economy. The level of reserves is within the range set by the trustees (currently £1.7m-£3.5m) to cover risks in CPRE's sources of income, cashflow and allow for investment in CPRE.

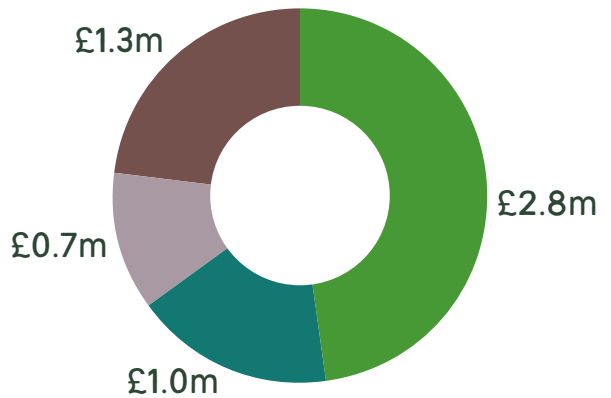
Financial summary 2021

Our total income £3.3m



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

Our total expenditure £5.8m



- Campaigning, communications and other charitable activities
- Support to county and regional groups
- Supporter services
- Raising funds

Thank you

The generosity of our wonderful supporters continues to be the foundation of all CPRE's work. Your commitment to giving is helping us achieve our vision of a beautiful and thriving countryside that enriches all our lives.

We're incredibly grateful to the CPRE supporters who remembered us in their wills. Their gifts will help us to ensure the countryside they loved will be protected and enhanced for generations to come.

Dr M Anderson	Mrs E Dawson	Mr C Manktelow	Mr J Pope	Miss G Thatcher
Mr F Ashcroft	Ms A Donne	Ms V Martin	Mr J Raddings	Mrs S Thomas
Mrs R Barnett	Miss D Fox	Mr K Matthews	Mrs M Ramsell	Mr A Trenaman
Miss P Bastow	Mr D Fromm	Miss B Mayer	Mr J Reed	Mrs P Verrall
Mr C Brown	Miss W Gossage	Mr J Motion	Ms J Reynolds	Mr D Ward
Dr D Butler	Mr P Griffiths	Miss D Neale	Mrs J Richardson	Miss J Williams
Mrs J Chisholm	Mr J Headley	Ms M Page	Mr D Rimmer	Mrs J Wilson
Mr D Cox	Mrs E Hill-Smith	Miss B Pearson	Mr J Shackleton	Mrs G Yarham
Mr J Criddle	Mrs D Holmes	Miss C Penny	Mrs D Silk	Miss D Young
Miss P Crimmin	Miss V Jackson	MS V Pettit	Mr P Sinclair	
Miss E Dale	Mr M Long	Mrs E Phillips	Mr J Steff-Langston	
Miss B Davis	Mrs L Lourie	Mrs S Phillips	Mr M Stubbington	

Sincere thanks to the generous individuals and anonymous donors who made major contributions to our campaigning this year. The significant successes we've achieved would not have been possible without you.

Mr & Mrs T Adburgham	Mrs S Buchan	Mr I Gooding	Mr M Reynolds	Dr P White
Mr T Barker	Mr F Clarke	Mrs M Hallatt	Ms S Rolstone	Mr A Wood
Miss J Bird	Mrs M Cooke	Mrs A Humphrey	Miss S Shields	Mr J Woodnutt
Mr J Boden	Ms M de Botton	Mrs D Moggach	Mrs K Stevenson	Mrs V Wormsley
Mrs J Boosey	Mr R Foster	Ms S Palmer	Mr R Thomson	
Mr J Brown	Sir David Gilmour	Ms A Purdon	Mrs M Walker	

We hugely appreciate the support of the trusts who kindly facilitated so much of CPRE's work in the past year.

Amelia Chadwick Trust	George Cadbury Fund Ltd	Peacock Charitable Trust
B and J Lloyd Family Charitable Trust	John Ellerman Foundation	Samuel Storey Family Charitable Trust
Bedford Road Charitable Fund	Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	Schlaikjer-McIntyre Family Fund
Constance Travis Charitable Trust	Leonard Chadwick Charitable Trust	Seven Helpers Trust
Dalgleish Trust	Lochlands Trust	The Derek and Clare Stevens Trust
European Climate Foundation	MCS Charitable Foundation	The National Lottery Heritage Fund
Foundation for Integrated Transport	Miss Hanson's Charitable Trust	The Underwood Trust

Voices for the countryside

With Emma Bridgewater CBE
President of CPRE, the countryside charity



Of all the charities I've been involved with, I've never known any that could match CPRE's influence – which has always come from a powerful combination of local activism backed by national research and lobbying. It's not just enough for us to go out and plant hedgerows; CPRE is constantly working towards the policy solutions that will make hedge planting a priority for every farmer and landowner.

Likewise, while our local volunteers are busy identifying derelict sites that would benefit from new homes, our national campaigners are winning solid government commitments – and funding – to support the urban regeneration that saves pristine countryside and revives former industrial heartlands, like the city of

Stoke on Trent that I care about so very much. But those commitments and policy changes would not be possible without the volunteers who represent public opinion and grassroots strength.

So, after two severely disrupted years, it's been wonderful to see CPRE's county groups engaging in the sort of community facing activities that defined our local network pre-pandemic. In fact, being forced online helped our volunteers develop a digital presence which has paid dividends since we've been able to mobilise people 'in real life'.

Thanks to the shop window of social media, we've recruited hundreds of volunteers – of all ages and backgrounds – to help us with the vast range

of activities covered in this review. Whether monitoring river pollution, clearing litter, leading walks or posting great photos, there have never been so many ways to get involved and feel part of a close-knit community of countryside lovers.

I'm particularly proud that our work to champion diversity in the countryside has helped us welcome in many more people of colour and engage with other disadvantaged communities. We continue to aspire to be a voice for everyone who cares about the countryside or would benefit from better access to green space. If that resonates with you, or you've been inspired by our achievements in the past year, I'd urge you to check out the vacancies near you at volunteer.cpre.org.uk

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Emma Bridgewater". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a period at the end. It is positioned above a decorative graphic consisting of a dark brown wavy shape above a green wavy shape.

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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Photo credits

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The
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