



The  
countryside  
charity

# Chair of Policy Committee recruitment pack 2023



# Welcome and thanks for your interest in the role of chair of Policy Committee.



CPRE, the countryside charity, has been advocating for a thriving, beautiful countryside rich in nature for almost 100 years. We believe that the countryside is for everyone and will play a crucial role in our nation's response to the climate emergency. We aim to influence government policy, and raise the profile of countryside issues such as the climate emergency, affordable housing, protecting the green belt, sustainable farming, land management and transport.

From our earliest days we've shaped government countryside policies, from the creation of National Parks to recently trying to prevent damaging changes to planning legislation. You can read more about our history and successes [here](#).

The Policy Committee has played a vital part in our successes by advising CPRE's board of trustees on the policies which form the backbone of our campaigning. You'll be joining at a time of renewal and innovation for the Committee, reflecting equally exciting changes in CPRE as a whole. We've undergone a transformation, giving us a new strategy, brand, website, and stronger organisational values.

We've reviewed how we develop policy, ensuring our policies are evidence-based, politically savvy and build a persuasive platform from which to campaign for our vision for the countryside. We confirmed the scope of the Policy Committee in ensuring our policies work and are true to our charitable objectives. Also, when developing policy, in addition to considering the contributions of our network of 41 local CPRE charities across England, we work more systematically with external partners and are focused on the needs of our beneficiaries.

Planning is a priority for us and recently it's become even more important with the government's proposals to deregulate the planning system. We lead a coalition campaigning for upcoming legislation to deliver for people, communities and nature. The Policy Committee has been a key adviser in handling that campaign. We've also updated our Green Belt policy and supported an audit of new-build housing quality.

But it isn't all about planning. The Committee led a programme to develop holistic policies on the climate emergency. During 2023, we'll be considering the impact of policy changes on farming, landscape protection and enhancement, and renewable energy deployment.

The countryside is the heart and soul of England. It can offer answers to many current problems. Nature-based, environmentally-sound solutions are often missed in the rush for short-term gain, or because society fails to understand their true value. To understand and communicate those opportunities the Policy Committee needs a range of expertise: these are complex, multi-faceted issues. That's where you come in. Could you help us to make the countryside appreciated as the asset it truly is? You can read more about the knowledge we're seeking in the skills, knowledge and experience section below.

I hope this pack inspires you to get involved in our work to ensure a thriving countryside for everyone.

**Simon Murray, chair of the board of trustees**



## What you'll be doing

Policy Committee advises on positive solutions for the issues facing the countryside and the environment. Your expertise will help inform our policy and the practical action we take on a national and local level.

The Committee is involved in the development of new policies and the review of existing ones, so they continue to fulfil our vision, values and long-term strategy as external circumstances inevitably change. You'll contribute to the advice the Committee gives to CPRE staff and the board of trustees to inform policy decisions.

### **As chair of Policy Committee, you'll:**

- Chair meetings of the Policy Committee, manage its discussions and enable other Committee members to play a full role in shaping CPRE's policy orientation
- Work in partnership with the Committee, trustee board and the director of Campaigns and Policy to provide high quality policy advice, verbally and in writing, to further CPRE's aims, set its strategic direction and uphold its values
- Act as the main link between the Policy Committee and the trustee board, working closely with the Chair of the board
- Coordinate the Policy Committee's co-creation of the development of policy papers with staff and the wider CPRE network
- Lead the setting, monitoring and evaluation of a work programme for the committee
- Help build closer relationships between the board, local CPREs and regional groups on policy matters
- Support, and where appropriate, challenge the director of Campaigns and Policy and chief executive, and ensure that the Policy Committee as a whole works in partnership with staff
- Build an effective Committee and contribute to the recruitment, induction and training of new members
- Be willing to share your skills and knowledge generously in a constructive and supportive way, engaging in vigorous debate and acting as a critical friend to improve CPRE's policies
- Be mindful of the needs of our beneficiaries and be confident in proposing realistic new ideas about how our policies can help to shape a better future for them
- Occasionally, represent CPRE at meetings and functions and act as a spokesperson

As a trustee, you'll be a central part of a passionate charity, determined to make a change. You'll contribute towards decisions to develop our charity in line with our strategy and policy, and ensure our compliance with Charity Commission and other legal and governance regulations. There's a useful guide to the role of a trustee [here](#).

## Who we're looking for

We're looking for someone with specialist knowledge and recent senior level responsibility in strategic planning relevant to the countryside. Experience in urban regeneration is also desirable.

### The skills and experience you'll need

- A high level of experience and expertise in a range of relevant policy areas, including the environmental agenda and the role of land use planning
- Recent senior level responsibility for strategic planning and planning casework relevant to the countryside
- The ability to chair meetings effectively, leading the discussions of a broad range of policy and campaign subjects whilst balancing conflicting views in a sensitive manner
- The ability to build an effective Committee and contribute to the recruitment, induction and training of new members
- Strategic vision, an openness to new policy ideas and good independent judgment
- The ability to build credibility within CPRE to champion change when necessary. This will involve effective communication skills, including public speaking
- Commitment to CPRE's vision and values
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship and company directorship
- The ability to devote the necessary time and effort

We're keen to ensure the Committee and board of trustees are diverse and represent our society as a whole. We welcome applications from groups which are under-represented in trustee roles and in CPRE, including women, people with a disability and people of colour.

## Time commitment

As Policy Committee chair, you'll attend both Policy Committee and board of trustee meetings. We expect this role will require a time commitment of a few hours each week. There'll be reading and preparation to undertake ahead of meetings.

The Policy Committee meets quarterly, usually mid-week, for about three hours, with a mix of online and in-person meetings.

The board of trustees also meet quarterly with the senior leadership team. This is also usually mid-week, for 4-5 hours with a mix of online and in-person meetings. One meeting involves an overnight stay to deepen relationships with local CPRE colleagues and to learn about local issues. There's also a monthly online call to help trustees keep in touch.

## About us

CPRE is a membership organisation made up of a national charity and a network of 41 county – based local charities in England.

**CPRE campaigns for a beautiful and thriving countryside that is valued, enjoyed and accessible to everyone by:**

- vConnecting people and the countryside so that everyone can benefit from and value it
- Promoting rural life to ensure the countryside and communities can thrive
- Empowering communities to improve and protect their local environment

**CPRE has recently registered strong achievements across a range of policy areas:**

- Our petition calling for reliable rural bus services gathered 51,540 signatures and the online launch of our [Every village, every hour report](#) was attended by 190 MPs, peers and key stakeholders including the government minister responsible for the National Bus Strategy
- Our planning campaign has reversed some of the damaging threats proposed in the government's white paper, such as lifting the small sites cap for affordable housing and securing guarantees for local democracy in the planning process. We also were instrumental in defeating proposals for a zoning-based approach to planning
- After a well-attended parliamentary launch for our [Hedge Fund report](#) on hedgerows, we've gained over 80 parliamentary champions. We've also secured major increases in government funding and a pledge to plant 45,000 miles of hedgerow every year by 2050.

You can find out more about what we do on our [our website](#).

## Our values

### Open

We are inclusive and respectful of everybody, no matter who they are or where they live. Our countryside is for everyone and so are we.

### Connected

We value lasting and effective relationships. We invite and encourage collaboration to find what is best for the countryside we love.

### Trusted

We use evidence, knowledge and experience to influence positive change. Others believe what we say because they know we can back it up.

### Inspirational

We bring ambition and determination to everything we do. We channel our passion to motivate others and encourage them to act.

## How to apply

If you'd like a pre-application chat, please email Patricia Broadfoot, vice-chair of the board of trustees, at [PatriciaB@cpre.org.uk](mailto:PatriciaB@cpre.org.uk).

You should apply online [via the volunteer hub](#) where you can share with us your motivation for the role. You'll also be required to upload your CV. The deadline for applications is midday on **Friday 17 March 2023**.

Once we receive your application the Nominations Committee will carry out a shortlisting process and identify the candidates who most clearly match the requirements of the role. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an informal interview on Tuesday 28 March or Wednesday 29 March at our office in London, although if an online meeting would be more convenient for you, please let us know.

If you require any special arrangements or assistance in making your application, or at interview, please include this in your online application. If you've any queries, please contact the volunteering team at [volunteeringteam@cpre.org.uk](mailto:volunteeringteam@cpre.org.uk).

## Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

At CPRE we believe it is our responsibility to strive for a society where we can all be ourselves and feel able to reach our full potential, whatever our identity and background.

We'll ensure that our organisation and all we do is open to everyone and that we actively address any barriers to participation by any group.

Our case for the countryside depends upon having the broadest and most diverse and inclusive public support possible and because the countryside will benefit from the engagement and attention of people from all backgrounds. We also believe that the benefits of a well-managed countryside should be accessible to all.

We value all the people who work, volunteer for and who join CPRE and we want everyone to be able to reach their potential with us. This means listening to and understanding people's views, creating a working environment where everyone is treated with respect and able to contribute fully. And it means making sure everyone feels included and valued for their talent, knowledge and experience.

## Useful links

[Our vision](#)

[Our achievements and history](#)

[Our strategic plan 2020-2026: a summary](#)

[Our year: a review of 2021-22](#)

[Resources](#)

[Volunteer privacy policy](#)

[CPRE Volunteering Commitments](#)