

100
YEARS



Campaign
to Protect
Rural England

Network Assembly Chair Volunteer Recruitment Pack

January 2026



CPRE Overview

2026, marks 100 years of CPRE standing up for the countryside.

From campaigning for the first Green Belts and National Parks to protecting hedgerows and shaping better planning, our history shows what's possible when people come together to stand up for the countryside.

We believe the countryside is for everyone, and that a thriving, beautiful countryside that is rich in nature will play a crucial role in our nation's response to the climate emergency. We work hard to enhance, promote, and protect the countryside, including the communities within it.

CPRE has always punched above its weight. From our earliest days we've shaped government policies about the countryside, from the creation of National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now known as National Landscape), and the Green Belt in the 1950s, through to recently leading a coalition of organisations to prevent damaging deregulation of the planning legislation that would have badly affected the countryside.

CPRE is a federated network of charities comprising national CPRE and over 40 local CPREs in the counties of England. Together, the CPRE network combines equally valued national parliamentary and media influence, with local activism which supports and enables the delivery of our vision and strategic aims:

1. **Connect People and Countryside** – We're promoting the value and benefits of the countryside so that far more people engage with, understand, and enjoy it.
2. **Promote Rural Life** – We're bringing together solutions for the rural economy, housing, farming, transport and the natural environment to achieve positive progress for our countryside and those who live and work in it.
3. **Empower Communities** – We're working with local CPRE groups to help them engage with their communities and involve more people in improving their green spaces through volunteering and local action.



About the Assembly

The National Assembly is at the heart of leading how the CPRE network (a national organisation 40 local branches which are separate charities) operates effectively together.

The Assembly enables every CPRE group, national and local, to have an equal voice in shaping, advising, and achieving consensus on key issues facing the countryside.

The Assembly is made up of the chairs of each of the local branches, the national chair, and up to 10 additional members with relevant expertise. Often work is carried out between meetings by Task and Finish Groups and other standing groups reporting into the quarterly Assembly meetings.

This is an important moment for CPRE, as we celebrate our centenary in 2026 and launch a strategy to take us beyond next year to 2035. It is also a critical moment for the countryside which faces increasing threats from amongst other things, new development, infrastructure and climate change.

CPRE's role in articulating solutions that protect the countryside is more important than ever. Working more closely together across the CPRE network will be critical to the delivery of the new strategy.



Background to the role

The countryside continues to face multiple challenges, including responding to the climate emergency, the consequences of intensive farming, the expansion of urban communities, the impact of potential deregulation and uncontrolled development, and the lack of affordable housing and transport for rural and remote communities.

Dealing with these issues in an environment of rapid political, social and technological change brings added levels of complexity.

We formed a Network Assembly three years ago aimed at sharpening the alignment of the wider CPRE community around the key strategic issues, creating a more coherent approach to developing and implementing our campaigns and maximising the value of working together. The Assembly enables every CPRE group, national and local, to have an equal voice in shaping, advising, and achieving consensus on these important matters.

Who we're looking for

We're looking for an Assembly chair who is motivated by playing a leading role in maximising the potential of the whole CPRE community to strengthen its voice and activities for the benefit of the countryside.

The Assembly meets quarterly, usually mid-week, for about three hours. The meetings are held online. There'll be preparation and liaising to undertake ahead of meetings, so we expect this role will require a time commitment of **half a day a week, two to three days a month.**

The chair of the Assembly is elected annually, can serve for a maximum of three years, and attends the trustee board meetings of the national CPRE charity.



What you'll be doing

The main areas of responsibility include:

- Facilitating and guiding the Network Assembly coalition, via formal meetings and informal networking and engagement, to enable it to shape, influence and advise CPRE's work.
- Fostering an environment for the Network Assembly to co-operate in a spirit of reciprocal partnership, trust and respect to support the fulfilment of our charitable objectives and the delivery of our strategy.
- Overseeing the consideration of matters of key interest to the CPRE network and providing advice and perspective to the boards of the national and local CPRE charities.
- Identifying and ensuring significant issues of concern to local or national CPRE charities are openly discussed and addressed.
- Reviewing the operation of the Network Assembly and, where appropriate, making recommendations to improve its function.
- Supporting good communication between all CPRE charities and facilitating joint working wherever this would be beneficial.
- Safeguarding the reputation and values of CPRE.
- Occasionally representing CPRE at other meetings and functions and acting as a spokesperson.
- Joining sub-group activity based on own interests and experience.
- The role is subject to an annual performance review with an achievements statement reported to the AGM of CPRE.

There are many benefits to this volunteering role. Our experience from similar roles indicates that people have learnt new skills and that the role complemented their professional and personal life. Many also report that it's made them happier and they've gained confidence to help with future aspirations.



The candidate

To enjoy, and be successful in this role, the skills and experience you need are:

- The ability to chair large, multi-stakeholder meetings efficiently and effectively.
- An understanding and passion for the countryside and what it means to those who live in it and those who depend on it.
- A high level of emotional intelligence including self-awareness and skilful management of personal impact on others, as well as the ability to ‘read’ people.
- Excellent listening and communication skills, including constructive challenge, tact and diplomacy.
- An impartial and objective approach which is essential to enable the Network Assembly to successfully fulfil its function.
- The ability to facilitate and guide discussions without dominating and to blend differing views to achieve consensual agreement.
- A motivation for the challenge of maximising the potential of the CPRE movement in protecting and enhancing the countryside.
- An ability to network and build trust-based relationships at all levels across the CPRE movement.
- The ability to generate and discern key insights from networking discussions and use these to set an agenda that prioritises the strategic issues.
- Access to a computer and the internet at home.
- Availability which allows you to commit to regular volunteer work including attendance at meetings.

CPRE – our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

This is a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and its importance both within CPRE and in the Countryside, including the willingness to role model inclusive and accountable leadership.

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

Our vision is a countryside for all: a thriving, beautiful countryside that everyone can access and benefit from. A place where people can fully enjoy, enhance, and protect nature. A countryside that is inclusive and diverse, whether you live there or visit.

In order to achieve this vision, we at CPRE will ensure that our organisation and all we do is open to all and that we actively address any barriers to participation for any group.

How to apply

If you'd like a pre-application chat, then please email the volunteering team at volunteeringteam@cpre.org.uk.

You should apply online via the volunteer hub, where you can share your motivations for the role with us. You'll also be required to upload your CV and give the contact details of two people we can approach for references if you are the successful candidate.

The deadline for applications is Tuesday 3 March 2026.

Once we receive your application, our Nominations Committee will carry out a short-listing process and identify the candidates who most clearly match the requirements of the role. These candidates will be invited for an informal interview, either online or at our office in London.

If you require any special arrangements or assistance in making your application, or at interview, then please include this in your online application.

If you've any queries, please email the volunteering team at volunteeringteam@cpre.org.uk.

Useful links

- [Our vision](#)
- [Our achievements and history](#)
- [What we do](#)
- [Our strategy 2024-26](#)
- [Annual report and financial statements 2024](#)

