



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
Standing up for your countryside

Our year

Annual Review
2016/17

Emma Bridgewater introduces CPRE

I was surprised but delighted by the invitation to become President of the Campaign to Protect Rural England. I have always admired CPRE for its historic achievements like National Parks and Green Belts – ideas often taken for granted but without which our country would look very different.

Ninety years after its creation, CPRE remains as relevant as ever. Making a success of urgent issues, such as planning Brexit and providing more affordable housing, will partly rely on CPRE's distinct attributes. Like no other organisation, CPRE has an understanding of the value of our green spaces, the experience of getting the right development in the right place, and the passion to protect the landscapes that sustain and inspire us.

CPRE has always offered positive solutions – ideas that don't just benefit rural England, but improve people's lives and create a better country. For example, one of the best ways we can protect the countryside, and provide affordable homes, is by encouraging quality development on the suitable brownfield sites that can provide over one million houses. As CPRE President, I am making the promotion of urban regeneration my personal mission. There has never been a more important time to revitalise our city centres while resisting the tide of urban sprawl.

In fighting for its vision – “a beautiful and living countryside valued and enjoyed by all” – CPRE continues to wield huge influence (as this Annual Review demonstrates). But we cannot challenge decision-makers effectively without public support. If you share our vision, and value the work contained in these pages, please consider joining or supporting CPRE as we stand up for your countryside.



A year to remember

Highlights of 2016/17

SALUTING “22 IDEAS THAT SAVED THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE”

We launched our 90th anniversary book at Hatchards Piccadilly in May 2016. Contributors including Melvyn Bragg, Julia Bradbury and Simon Jenkins came along to toast CPRE's historic achievements and support our new campaigns.



EXTENDING THE YORKSHIRE DALES AND LAKE DISTRICT NATIONAL PARKS

From 1 August 2016, an extra 120,000 acres of beautiful countryside began to benefit from increased protection and tourism following a long campaign by CPRE and our partners.



SAVING THE HISTORIC FARTHINGLOE VALLEY

Court of Appeal judges quashed this planning application in a landmark judgement of September 2016. CPRE Kent had challenged the development of over 600 houses as damaging to the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



KEEPING PYLONS OUT OF THE LAKE DISTRICT

CPRE's representatives in Cumbria, the Friends of the Lake District, convinced National Grid to look at burying an extensive section of the proposed Carlisle to Morecambe power line. The announcement, in October 2016, came shortly after CPRE President Emma Bridgewater appeared on the BBC's *Inside Out* to back the campaign.



CELEBRATING OUR 90TH BIRTHDAY

The home of our archives, the Museum of English Rural Life, hosted a special panel discussion in December 2016 on CPRE's positive impact on rural life. University of Reading Vice Chancellor Sir David Bell chaired a panel featuring CPRE chief executive Shaun Spiers, broadcaster Kate Adie, writer Clive Aslet and president of the Landscape Institute Merrick Denton-Thompson.



“The fact that so much beauty survives is in large part due to the campaigning vigour of CPRE.”

Clive Aslet

INFLUENCING THE HOUSING WHITE PAPER

The then Housing Minister Gavin Barwell gave our Annual Lecture in February 2017, praising CPRE's input: *“Any honest assessment will quickly spot the marks of your influence – whether it's the protection of the Green Belt, our opposition to speculative development or our insistence on community involvement in planning and design.”*



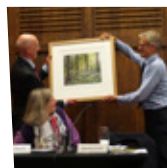
WELCOMING THE NATIONAL LITTER STRATEGY

Following strong CPRE lobbying the Government launched an ambitious plan in April 2017, including commitments to tackle roadside litter.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

We said farewell to our Chief Executive of 13 years, Shaun Spiers, at a May 2017 lecture from geographer Nicholas Crane on the future of the English landscape. We welcome Crispin Truman as he takes up the baton in autumn 2017.



Influencing

Government policy on housing



We stood up for affordable rural housing



Emma Bridgewater visiting an affordable rural housing project in Cornwall

We argued that action was needed to protect rural affordable housing and support the housing associations and smaller builders who deliver it.

“CPRE is leading calls to amend parts of the Housing and Planning Bill which it believes will further limit the availability of affordable homes in rural areas.”

The Observer, April 2016

The Housing and Planning Act of May 2016 allowed housing associations to reserve homes on “rural exception sites” as permanently affordable housing for local people, and ruled out the forced sale of council homes in designated landscapes. Prime Minister Theresa May later pledged to support smaller builders and “encourage housing associations and local authorities to build more”.

We highlighted housing market failings



Brownfield sites lie empty while housebuilders focus on greenfield

We called for big developers to build on their existing land banks instead of targeting more greenfield sites. A Government White Paper, *Fixing Our Broken Housing Market*, reflected our concerns and proposed new powers to make sure that sites with planning permission are built out quickly.

“CPRE has long argued that failures in the housing market can’t be solved simply by releasing more land for building. The White Paper clearly and unequivocally agrees with that view ... People can’t live in a planning permission.” Gavin Barwell, (the then) Housing Minister, at CPRE’s Annual Lecture, February 2017

We won support for urban regeneration and the Green Belt



Shaun Spiers visiting Alconbury Weald – England’s largest brownfield site

Our research showed that housing is built much faster on previously-developed “brownfield” sites than on greenfield, and that such sites could accommodate over a million new homes. The Government committed to “make more land available for homes in the right places by maximising the contribution from brownfield”, and introduced local brownfield registers to help identify suitable sites – a CPRE demand since 2010.

New CPRE research underlined the importance of the Green Belt for wildlife and recreation, supporting our calls for its continued protection. The Housing White Paper subsequently stated that Green Belt is “highly valued by local communities” and reaffirmed the Government’s commitment to protect it.

Leading

the debate on infrastructure

We promoted good design in renewables

We showed how solar panels on domestic roofs can enhance the built environment and provide an alternative to solar arrays on farmland.

"With 800,000 home solar-panel systems installed in the UK since 2010, and new technologies reducing the cost of solar panels despite government subsidy cuts, CPRE's report and 10-point how-to guide is long awaited."

Country Life, October 2016

We secured funding for greener travel

CPRE led the campaign for the Infrastructure Act 2015 to include a duty to invest in walking and cycling – with a fair share of funding for rural areas. We were therefore delighted to see the publication of the first ever Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy in April 2017, and welcomed the strategy's specific ambition to make rural roads safer for walkers and cyclists.

We released landmark research on the impact of roads

With funding for new roads set to triple to £3billion a year by 2020, our March 2017 report, *The End of the Road?*, showed that road-building is failing to provide the congestion relief and economic boost promised, while devastating the environment.

A launch seminar attended by the Department for Transport, Highways England and Office of Rail and Road gave us the opportunity to make a strong case for the Government to resist adding more capacity, and focus on keeping existing roads in good repair while reducing their environmental impacts.



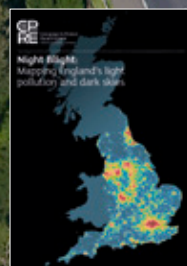
We raised awareness of light pollution and dark skies:

Our *Night Blight* maps provided vital evidence to encourage local councils and Highways England to take action against wasteful light pollution.

"By highlighting the regions where light pollution is greatest, these maps will encourage remedial efforts that will not only save energy, but also enable more of us to enjoy a dark sky in the way earlier generations could."

Sir Martin Rees, Astronomer Royal

The initiative won support from the Institution of Lighting Professionals and convinced Tata Steel – whose Rotherham foundry was the brightest spot in England – to commit to replacing their lighting with less polluting units. *Night Blight* was shortlisted for Campaign of the Year in the prestigious ENDS (Environmental Data Services) Awards 2017.



Shaping the future of our landscape

We set out an influential green vision for farming, post-Brexit

Following the EU referendum, our *New Model Farming* report showed how new policies could help all farms prosper and allow the public to benefit from beautiful landscapes, abundant wildlife and better flood management.



“CPRE call for a revolution of farm subsidies to help smaller, more diverse farms.”
Sustainable Food Trust

“CPRE is absolutely right to urge the UK and EU focus attention on what a proper food and farm policy should be.”
Tim Lang, Professor of Food Policy at London City University

“CPRE has spotted an opportunity for the countryside ... the money dispensed to farmers through the Common Agricultural Policy. Think what it could mean for the environment if this were spent differently.”
Clive Aslet, Daily Telegraph

We promoted the benefits of a deposit return system

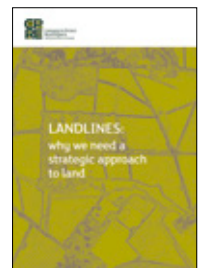


With drinks containers one of the most visible forms of litter in the English landscape, CPRE President Emma Bridgewater used her 2016 AGM speech to urge the Government to introduce a deposit scheme.

Our argument that the idea would discourage littering, protect wildlife and save resources meant the Sky News *#OceanRescue* campaign included a call for deposits on plastic bottles. Coca-Cola and the waste giant Suez UK both gave their support to the idea, and the Government's Litter Strategy included a welcome commitment to explore options for deposit return systems.

We won support for a more strategic approach to land

Our *Landlines* pamphlet kick-started a debate on the need for a strategic approach to our most important resource: land. Contributors in



support of our idea included the Chairs of the UK Committee on Climate Change and the Woodland Trust, Lord Deben and Baroness Young.

Leading architect Sir Terry Farrell agreed that “the proper planning of land use is a top priority for our very survival in the long term”, and endorsed CPRE’s belief that urban regeneration is “the best way to protect the countryside”.

“This outstanding new report contains far-reaching ideas which could be a blueprint for the next ten years.”
Nicholas Crane, President of the Royal Geographical Society

Our year in numbers

Our work had a tangible impact and engaged more people than ever in 2016/17. We'll let the numbers speak for themselves!

Engagement

31,762
followers

of CPRE on social media by the end of 2016, an increase of over 25% during the year.



341,935
people

we reached on Twitter in July 2016, thanks to Emma Bridgewater's AGM speech.

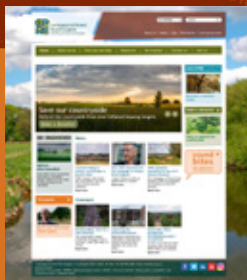


12,000
Facebook views

for our first animation, on the importance of Green Belts for biodiversity and recreation.



206,270
unique visits to our website in 2016



9,465 
emails

sent to MPs (covering all English constituencies) calling for stronger Green Belt protection and more housing on brownfield sites – our most successful e-action ever.

Saving green fields



**3,000
acres**

of the South Downs National Park which could have been sold off if not for CPRE Sussex.

60 acres

of Green Belt land near Cuffley successfully defended by CPRE Hertfordshire.



**30
acres**

of Freeman's Common – enjoyed by local people for over 200 years – which CPRE Bedfordshire campaigners helped save.

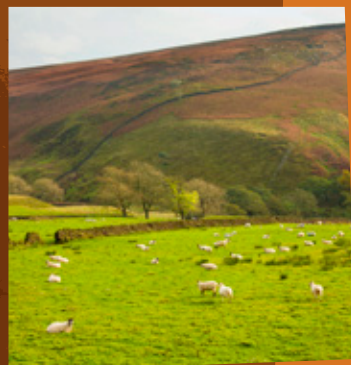


115 acres

of threatened land in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which remain intact thanks to CPRE Oxfordshire and their partners, who fought off one of the largest housing allocations ever proposed on protected land.

24%

The increase in area of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, fought for by CPRE and the Campaign for National Parks. The park's boundary now covers new parts of Cumbria and, for the first time, Lancashire.



Campaigning

6 billion

Number of plastic bags taken out of circulation in the six months to March 2016, thanks to the 5p charge CPRE helped bring in to force. 90% of shoppers in England now take their own bags to the checkout as a result, according to research from Cardiff University.

23.4 km

Length of a new line of 50m tall pylons now set to go under the Lake District National Park, thanks to CPRE's campaigners in Cumbria.

£1 billion

Funding available to local bodies as part of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy fought for by CPRE.



32,608

Sacks of litter collected by our LitterAction volunteers in the past year.



£70 million

Government funding we helped secure to reduce the impact of HS2 by supporting safer cycling and walking, and compensating affected communities and landscapes.



Research

6 months

The delay in building homes on greenfield sites compared with brownfield – showing that urban regeneration is a practical solution to the housing crisis.

1.1 million

The minimum number of homes that could be accommodated on suitable brownfield sites in England. The number of these sites has increased by 50% since 2010 (in over 70 areas with pilot brownfield registers) – proving that brownfield land is a renewable resource.



22%

Proportion of England untouched by light pollution.

47%



The average increase in traffic caused by new road schemes. 80% of schemes assessed for their environmental impact had damaged the landscape.

48

Local Nature Reserves created on Green Belt land since 2009. A fifth of our deciduous woodlands are also found within our Green Belts, supporting our calls for greater investment in their “natural capital”.



Funding and Finance 2016

£7.2m
total income

thanks to bequests of £4.2m, this was an exceptional year for legacies – boosting our total income to £7.2m.

84%

Proportion of our expenditure (£3.8m) spent on charitable activities in 2016.



£399,000

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

giftaid it

£36,503

Online donations in 2016, up from £28,544 in 2015.

[Make a donation ►](#)

£591,000

Expenditure passed on to our 9 regions and 43 branches who undertake so much valuable front line work.



£1.9m

Reserved to help finance 2018-19 activity towards the objectives in our new strategic plan: the promotion of policies to defend the countryside from damaging development, enhance its character, and take a more sustainable approach to land use.

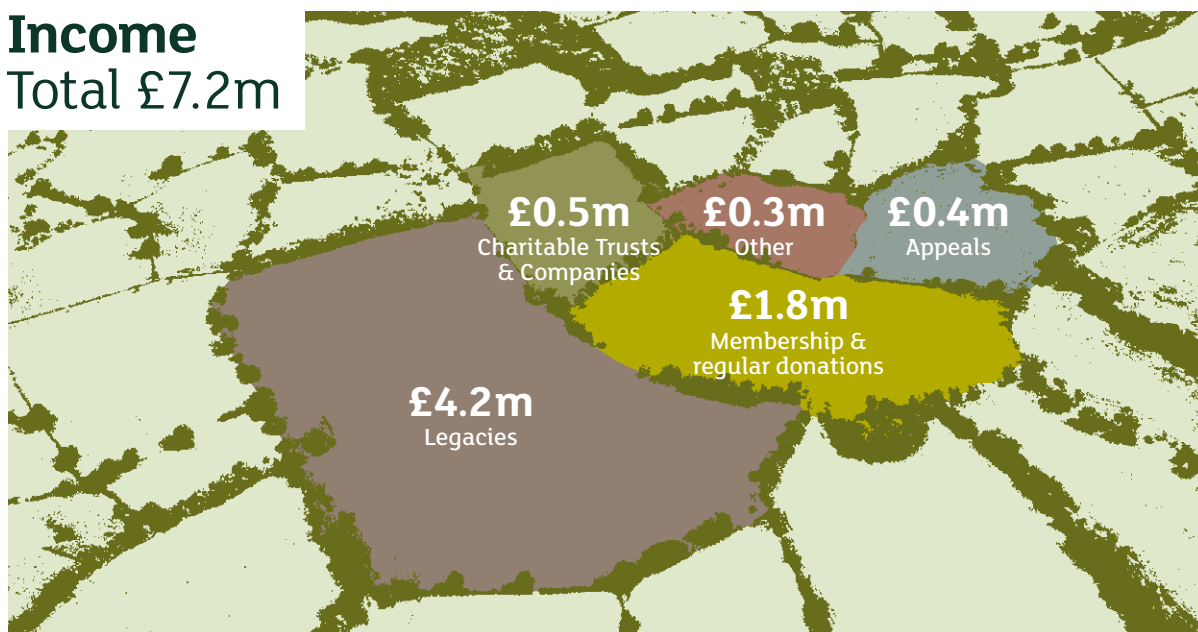


Financial summary

2016

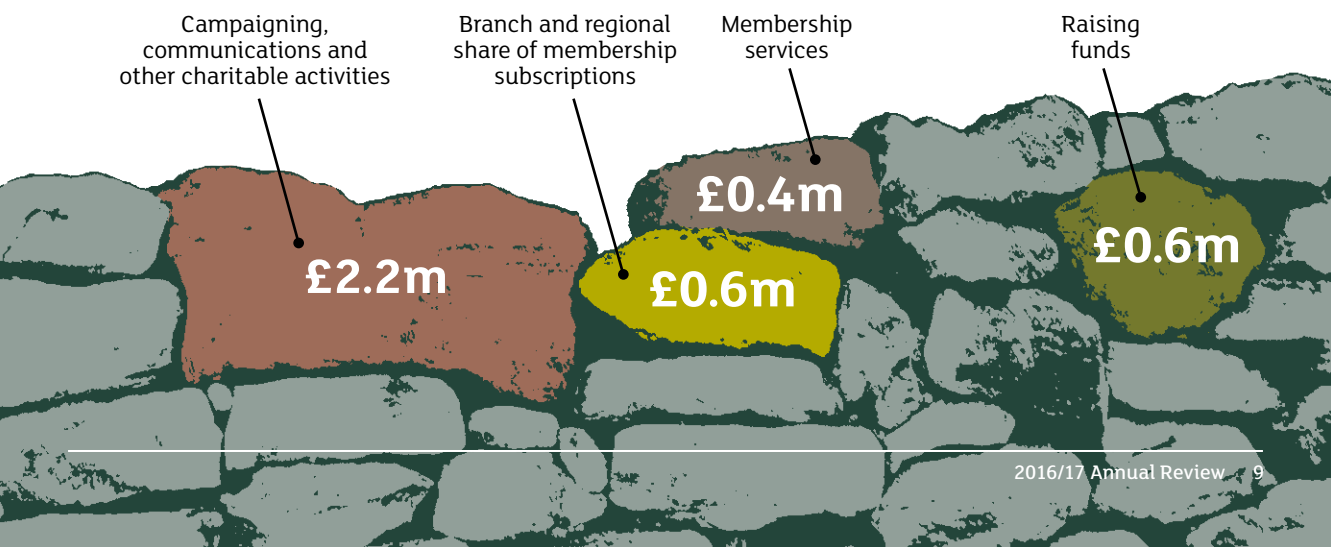
Income

Total £7.2m



Expenditure

Total £3.8m



Thank you

We would like to thank all of our supporters, whose generous donations helped us stand up for your countryside in 2016.

Legacy donations are essential to our work, and we are hugely appreciative of the many generous people who remembered CPRE in their will in 2016.

Mrs M A Arnett
Mrs B B Atkey
Dr C M Atkins
Mrs L M M Atkins
Ms S M Ball
Mr C A Birch
Mrs A M Black
Mr M Blank
Mr D R Brooks
Mr G Buckley
Miss J C Burnie
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Lady L M Cholmondeley
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Ms C A Redman
Mrs P Shanahan

Mrs D M Simms
Miss S E Slaughter
Miss H Taylor
Mr D S Tennant
Miss P Terry
Mr P B Twaits
Mr J W Walker
Mrs I P Watts
Ms M Wright

We kindly thank those individuals who gave generously towards our campaigns in 2016.

Mrs Acloque
Mr & Mrs T Adburgham
Sir Rudolph Agnew
Dr C Beels
Sir Quentin Blake
Mr J Boden
Mrs A M Bonsor
Ms M de Botton
Mr M F B Buchanan
Miss H Butcher &
Miss M Butcher

Mrs R K Carless
Dr & Mrs H Cecil
Mr F H Clarke
Mr M Cockett
Mr D Davis
Mr P Davis
Mr J Dean
The Hon Mrs G Fane
Mr R A Foster
Miss A M Gamham

Mr E Golton
Mrs E Graves
Mrs M D Hallatt
Mrs V J B Hibbert
Mr L D E Hollingworth
Mr DHL Hopkinson
Mr E P Lawrence
Mr & Mrs B MacJannette
Mrs MA Mallender
Mrs D Moggach

Miss J E Nicholson
Dr T M Parry
Mrs A L Pightling
Miss E J Reis
Mr M L Reynolds
Mr D M Salisbury
Miss S Shields
Mr & Mrs J Satchwell Smith
Mr H R W Smith
Mr S L Tanner

Mr I N Thomson
Mr H Webb
Mr & Mrs D Winter
Mr J Woodnutt
Mrs M E Work
Mr & Mrs J Wreford

We are grateful for the support of the following trusts and companies who gave generously to CPRE in 2016.

A D Power Will Trust
Amelia Chadwick Trust
B A Segal Charitable Trust
B and J Lloyd Family Charitable Trust
Bearrem Charitable Trust
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust
JTI
Kristina Martin Charitable Trust
Leonard Chadwick Charitable Trust
Local World Ltd
Miss Hanson's Charitable Trust
NFU Mutual
Philip Smith's Charitable Trust
Raphael Trust
Royal Astronomical Society

Salamanca Group Trust Ltd
Samworth Foundation
Sir Donald and Lady Edna Wilson Charitable Trust
Stephen Clark 1957 Charitable Trust
T D Paton Trust
The Bellinger Donnay Charitable Trust
The Constance Travis Charitable Trust
The David Fenton 1989 Charitable Trust
The Derek and Clare Stevens Trust
The Dingwall Trust
The Edith Mary Clark Foundation
The Essex Trust
The Gatliff Trust
The Hon M L Astor's Charitable Trust
The Huntly & Margery Sinclair Charitable Trust

The Ian Askew Charitable Trust
The John S Cohen Foundation
The Lambert Family Charitable Trust
The Loveday Charitable Trust
The Mercers' Company
The Miller Trust
The Muriel and Gus Coren Charitable Foundation
The Peacock Charitable Trust
The Reginald and Edna Hill Foundation
The Scouloudi Foundation
The Thornton Foundation
The Tolkien Trust
The Tuttiett Family Charitable Trust
The Underwood Trust
The William Haddon Charitable Trust

Supporting communities

"The encouragement and expertise from CPRE's national office and local campaigner helped raise awareness of our campaign, and gave us the confidence to challenge the plans. Thanks to their support, our group has saved tranquil green fields and historic views which will inspire future generations."

Maldon resident **Rosalind Oakley**, who led a local campaign against unsustainable developments totalling over 400 homes on the edge of the town.

"CPRE is hugely important, working tirelessly to protect and enhance our countryside. We are delighted to have been recognised by such an organisation."

Bill Jordan of Jordan's Cereals, on receiving a CPRE Bedfordshire design award for a new visitor centre providing community facilities and enhancing local surroundings.



"Thanks and appreciation for a timely report that encompasses all of the concerns of the very many local residents who are opposed to this proposal, and that illustrates what the loss of this beautiful natural space means to us all."

A resident of Barton, in response to CPRE Yorkshire & Humber's campaign against a supermarket, pub and 70 houses on the edge of the town.

"Thank you for the representation letter you sent in. It helped us immensely to have support from a prestigious national organisation like CPRE. Thank you for all the good work you do."

Message from the villagers of Lyneham after CPRE Wiltshire helped them defeat plans for an out-of-character 111-home estate.



"We must maximise the huge opportunities available to us, as highlighted by CPRE, to build new and fulfilling communities [within existing urban areas] featuring proper infrastructure."

Local MP **Andrew Mitchell**, on CPRE Warwickshire's support for the campaign to save Sutton Coldfield's Green Belt from 6,000 houses.

"I am grateful to CPRE for their help in drafting and supporting these amendments [to the Neighbourhood Planning Bill]. It has been very useful to have their expert advice and I'm pleased to have been able to work with them again."

Nick Herbert MP, on improving legislation to strengthen the Neighbourhood Plans which help local communities shape where they live.



CPRE at 90

making a difference in our anniversary year

"I have great respect for the contribution your members have made to public life over many decades in your ceaseless campaign to protect and enhance the English countryside. CPRE has played such a distinguished role – and for such a long time – that you suffer from that paradox of success: many people are completely unaware of your profound impact on the English landscape because they simply take it for granted."

Gavin Barwell
Former Housing Minister



"CPRE has an ever more crucial role in shaping the future of rural England. Without it, the vandals would have found it far easier to lay waste to this precious heritage. For the sake of us all, CPRE must always be there to stop them in their tracks."

Jonathan Dimbleby
Broadcaster



"Is the Campaign to Protect Rural England the best heritage conservation body? In a word, yes. CPRE tends to be logical and consistent ... they always say what they really think, not what pleases the Government, and they never have a day off from their core beliefs."

Heritage Journal website

"We are extremely proud to be a long term supporter of CPRE, as we understand the importance of protecting and maintaining our precious and beautiful countryside for future generations. CPRE are succeeding in raising public awareness of the current threat to our Green Belt, so supporting this campaign helps to preserve, invest and protect in this natural asset, enabling positive benefits for everyone."

The Underwood Trust

"CPRE hold the Government to account and put priceless resources of energy, passion and dedication into preventing our precious countryside being the soft target of ruthless development. I applaud their thousands of volunteers ... the nation as a whole has a great debt of gratitude to them all."

Merrick Denton-Thompson
President of the Landscape Institute



"The English countryside is a work of art that has been created over many centuries. CPRE plays a crucial role in defending this vitally important national artefact for the enjoyment of everyone. The fact that so much beauty survives is in large part due to the campaigning vigour of CPRE."

Clive Aslet
Writer



CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT
RURAL ENGLAND

A final word

From Su Sayer
Chair of the Campaign to
Protect Rural England


The core business of CPRE has always been saving green fields from inappropriate development, so I must pay special tribute to the work of our county branches – the front line in the defence of the English landscape.

In many cases, CPRE's branches are the only "third party" groups at planning inquiries, often facing an array of well-funded vested interests to fight for countryside that would otherwise be lost. They rely on hundreds of volunteers who contribute thousands of hours by campaigning locally: supporting community groups, responding to local plans and scouring individual planning applications.

But our local volunteers aren't merely on the defensive. They are constantly promoting practical ways of enhancing local countryside (from tree planting to litter picking); engaging young people with environmental issues; and championing the kind of positive development CPRE wants to see. And of course, CPRE's

influential national research relies on the local information provided by our branches. It is only because of our unique grassroots network that we can produce research reports which Nicholas Crane recently described as "balanced, informative and critically important".

Because we are independent from Government funding, and own no land, CPRE has the freedom to fight for real and lasting change in the public interest. It also means that our work relies on the financial support of members and supporters who share our vision of a beautiful and living countryside. Their humbling generosity has helped us achieve so much in 2016/17. Please help us do even more as we work towards an ambitious Strategic Plan for 2017-19: to defend the countryside from damaging development, enhance its distinct rural character and ensure that our most precious resource – the land – is used far more sustainably. Be part of the Campaign to Protect Rural England – join us today at cpre.org.uk



CPRE fights for a better future for England's unique, essential and precious countryside.

From giving parish councils expert advice on planning issues to influencing national and European policies, we work to protect and enhance the countryside.

Our work

We campaign for a sustainable future for the English countryside, a vital but undervalued environmental, economic and social asset to the nation. We highlight threats and promote positive solutions. Our in-depth research supports active campaigning, and we seek to influence public opinion and decision-makers at every level.

Our aims

- To promote and enhance the character of the countryside
- To promote a more sustainable approach to land use
- To defend the countryside from damaging development



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Rural England
Standing up for your countryside

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FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE

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