



The countryside charity  
**Gloucestershire**

# 2019 Annual Review

[www.cpreglos.org.uk](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk)



## Chair's Statement

I am delighted to write this introduction to our Annual Report because 2019 has been a truly memorable year for CPRE. Nationally, CPRE has been transformed into CPRE 'The Countryside Charity' with a brand-new logo – visible in this report – and an exciting new strategy to guide the years ahead. The new strategy builds on the work of CPRE over almost a hundred years in which it has striven to protect and support the countryside.

The new national strategy makes it clear that CPRE's priorities for our new decade will be working for a countryside that's rich in nature and accessible to everyone, whilst playing a crucial role in responding to the climate emergency. Because CPRE has groups in every county, including our own County group here in Gloucestershire, it can advocate nationwide for the kind of countryside we all want – a countryside that enriches all our lives and promotes our wellbeing. We want to protect, enhance and celebrate that countryside.

The new national strategy emphasises the importance of promoting the value and benefits of the countryside so that far more people engage with, understand and enjoy it,



**Prof. Patricia Broadfoot CBE,**  
County Chair

particularly those who have not benefited before. Closely related to this goal is of course, the need to promote sustainable rural living in the 21st century. Promoting the rural economy, housing, farming, transport and the natural environment to achieve positive progress for our countryside and those who live in it will be the central themes of the years ahead. We all know that we are facing a climate emergency. CPRE nationally is committed to doing everything that can be done to increase the resilience of our countryside through its campaigns, its national lobbying on important rural agendas and working with a variety of local partners.

Here in Gloucestershire we share those ambitions. During 2019, we have been refining our own new strategy and business plan so that we can play our part in making many more people in our community become engaged in the work of protecting and promoting our beautiful landscapes and the communities that share it. As you will read in this Report, our Districts continued their expert work fighting inappropriate planning applications. We held a very

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# Chair's Statement

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successful AGM and our first joint lecture with the Royal Agricultural University which was presented by Dame Fiona Reynolds, former Director-General of the National Trust. In November our Awards ceremony celebrated some of the most impressive rural initiatives in our County. Meanwhile our volunteers have continued to work tirelessly with other organisations to ensure that the voice of the countryside and the concerns of farmers, of village communities and of rural businesses continues to be heard. And we have continued to articulate the need for better public transport and the pressing need to protect our wildlife.

## Our Campaigns

### Review of Designated Landscapes

In 2018 we responded to the government's independent review on future directions for England's National Parks and AONBs, led by an expert panel chaired by Julian Glover. The final report of the Review was published in September 2019. CPRE warmly welcomed its recommendations which chime with our aspirations for these iconic landscapes.

For CPRE Gloucestershire we were particularly pleased that the Review has endorsed the strong case made over many

We are delighted to have been able to welcome our new County Director, Louise Williams, last September. With her wide range of experience in the charity sector, Louise is exceptionally well-placed to pursue this vital agenda. We now have a strong team of staff and volunteers and together we look forward to doing great things in 2020. Thank you, our supporters, for making all this possible. We hope we can look forward to your continued support in 2020 as we seek to play our part in creating 'a thriving, beautiful countryside for everyone'.

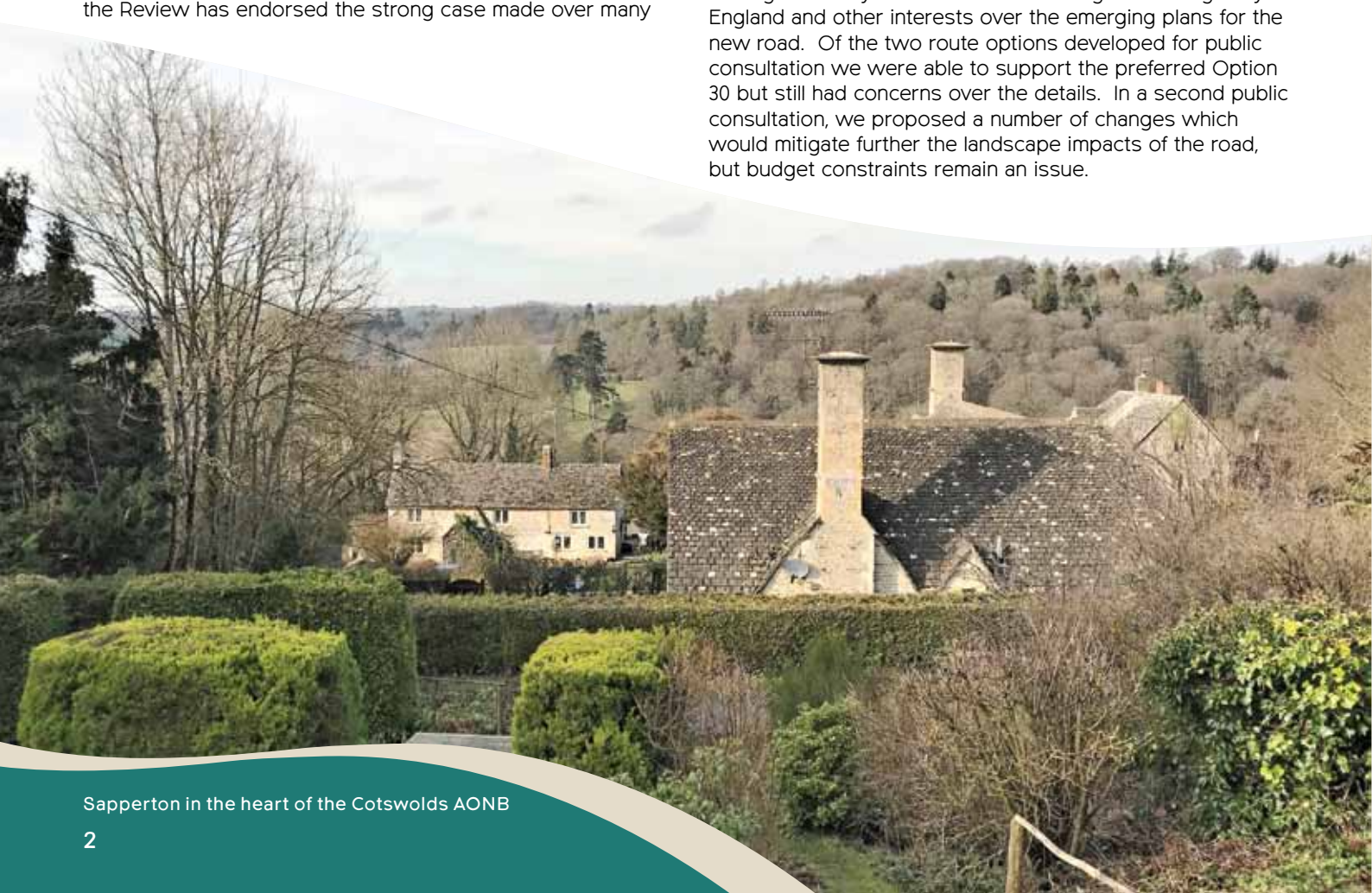
We would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thanks to our President Charles Martell for his continued support, to our Vice Presidents who promote our work and especially to Vice President, Dame Fiona Reynolds, for giving the very successful CPRE/RAU joint lecture last autumn.

**Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE, County Chair**

years that the Forest of Dean should be designated an AONB, and that the Cotswolds AONB should be considered for National Park status. We await the new government's response and are ready to continue to champion the case for special treatment for these outstanding areas of our county.

### A417 Missing Link

Throughout the year we continued dialogue with Highways England and other interests over the emerging plans for the new road. Of the two route options developed for public consultation we were able to support the preferred Option 30 but still had concerns over the details. In a second public consultation, we proposed a number of changes which would mitigate further the landscape impacts of the road, but budget constraints remain an issue.



# Local Plans

## Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Review

Having responded to an Issues and Options consultation at the end of 2018, we had been expecting a further consultation in 2019 but progress is slow. One option being progressed however is for a major expansion of Ashchurch/Tewkesbury in the form of a Garden Community. Here we have initiated discussions with Tewkesbury Borough Council and appointed a consultant to examine the traffic implications and proposals to upgrade the A46.

Sitting under the JCS, work is continuing to complete more detailed local plans for the three authorities covered by the JCS:

### Cheltenham Borough

In February we took part in the examination of the Borough Plan and in November commented on the modifications proposed by the council in response to the Inspector's findings.

### Gloucester City

After many years of gestation the Gloucester City Plan has reached the stage of Pre-Submission consultation. A consultation response was made as the year ended.

### Tewkesbury Borough

Following the 'Preferred Options' consultation in 2018, in the autumn we responded to a consultation on the Pre-submission Tewkesbury Borough Plan. Of greatest concern were proposals to remove land from the Green Belt adjacent to the airport and make it available for commercial development. Examination in Public is expected during 2020.

## Stroud District Local Plan Review

Stroud District has the challenge of finding sites for 8,000 additional dwellings as the Government's new standard method of determining housing need has required a 40% increase in annual delivery of new homes over the plan period. At the beginning of the year we responded to an "Emerging Strategy" paper and at the end of the year were working on a comprehensive response to a second consultation on a Draft Plan.

## Forest of Dean Local Plan Review

A plan review has commenced. In December we responded to the first stage – an Issues and Options consultation.

## Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan

The long process to produce a new County Minerals Plan is almost complete. In June we took part in the plan examination and in September we submitted comments on proposed modifications. The inspector's report was expected imminently as the year ended.

**'Of greatest concern were proposals to remove land from the Green Belt adjacent to the airport and make it available for commercial development.'**

# Communications, Recruitment and Public Profiles

CPRE Gloucestershire is having to respond to an ever-changing world, not least by raising our profile and attracting new members. During 2020 we plan to put new emphasis on social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. And CPRE Gloucestershire should become more prominent in your local communities. Achieving this has all been helped by the nationally led overhaul of our logo and branding, as you will see in this Annual Review. CPRE has also adopted a new strapline "The Countryside Charity" to represent in one statement what it is we do: in Gloucestershire, we are your charity looking after your countryside.

In 2020 we will be introducing a new website which will be a lot easier to use. Please check it out and tell us what you think. The next of our seasonal newsletters is due out in the Spring of 2020. This too will have a very different layout and we are interested in your views about that also. Next year we will be also sending out electronic versions of the newsletter so if you have given permission to use your email address, please look out for these. At the end of 2019 our total membership stood at 1185. Membership includes individuals, families, Parish and Town Councils and other kindred organisations. During the year we welcomed 41 new members.

# Planning

Scrutinising planning applications and making representations where development would be particularly harmful continues to be a main focus of activity by our District committees. Our concerns are typically the sustainability of the location and impact of development on the landscape. In this work we were admirably supported by our planning consultants David Crofts and Martin Hillier.

2019 was a quiet year over much of the county with few new speculative planning applications as up to date NPPF-compliant plans are in place in the Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury local authority areas (in the form of the JCS), in Stroud District and in Cotswold District, although evidence emerged during the year that Cheltenham Borough and Tewkesbury Borough were no longer able to meet the need to maintain a five year housing land supply.

The following is a summary of a number of planning cases where we submitted representations.

- Two proposed major developments in Bishops Cleeve, opposed by CPRE as outside the provisions of the JCS - 500 homes at 'North Cleevelands' where the decision remains delayed on transport grounds; and 215 homes plus commercial and retail space on Stoke Road. Here, the development was permitted at appeal because Tewkesbury Borough could not demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.
- Proposed development of land in Chalford as a rural exception site where we concluded that the scale of the development (31 houses) with over half planned as open market housing was outside the scope of the policy. The development was permitted.
- Proposed demolition of an industrial unit and change of use of land at Flaxley to allow the stationing of 5 converted shipping-containers for use as holiday lets. Our concerns centred around non-compliance with local planning policy. The application was refused.
- Proposed development of a timber business in Kilcot in the Cotswolds AONB. The issue is access which would involve large vehicles using a single-track lane which is part of the Cotswold Way and Monarch's Way, and impact on Midger Wood SSSI. Decision awaited.
- Proposed new secondary school on a greenfield site in Leckhampton. Although consistent with the emerging Cheltenham Borough Plan, CPRE and others have consistently opposed this location on traffic and environmental grounds. Decision awaited.
- Proposed development of the Pine Works Site at Lydney. We have supported this proposal which would create a mixed use development comprising a fish processing building, eel farm, restaurant/cafe and visitor centre on a brownfield site. Decision awaited.
- Proposed development of an artificial-surface, fenced playing field abutting Minchinhampton Common which is an SSSI. We were concerned that the proposals posed a discernable threat to important wildlife habitats. Decision awaited.
- Proposed development of 80 houses north of Newnham. We objected to this proposal on design grounds, as the plans paid little regard to the historic character of Newnham which is one of the architectural jewels of the Forest of Dean. The development was permitted.
- Proposed development of a number of 'disproportionately large agricultural sheds' in fields below woods at Waterley Bottom in the Cotswolds AONB in an area popular with walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Decision awaited.
- Proposed new football stadium for Forest Green Rovers West of Stonehouse near junction 13 of the M5, contrary to the Local Plan. The first application was refused. A second application with minor changes has been approved. We have sought call-in by the Secretary of State.
- Proposals for 24 dwellings on an isolated former poultry farm in the Special Landscape Area at Littleworth near Winchcombe. The application was dismissed at appeal.
- Proposed development of five houses in the Cotswolds AONB at Butts Lane in a sensitive location on the edge of Woodmancote. This follows refusal of a similar proposal in 2018. Decision awaited.
- Proposed 30 metre telecommunications mast at Bailey Hill, Yorkley. We were concerned that the location and form of construction would have an unacceptable landscape impact and that the claim that this was the only feasible site was not tested. Decision awaited.



# Working with others

## Activity has included:

- Contributing to the work of the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership where we continue to make a small financial contribution. Richard Lloyd now serves on the LNP Board.
- Through the LNP, and independently, making a comprehensive input to the consultation by GFirstLEP on the emerging Gloucestershire Local Industrial Strategy, emphasising the importance of farming and the rural economy in our county and the “green agenda.”
- Helping with the development of an ambitious Forestry England management plan for the Forest of Dean – Our Shared Forest.
- Discussing the scope of a partnership initiative with the Ramblers on “Lost Ways” to ensure that all public rights of way are properly recorded on the Definitive Map
- Establishing a grant programme in partnership with the Cotswolds Conservation Board targeted at Parish Councils and community groups to encourage tree planting in villages which will help mitigate the impacts of ash dieback. We successfully bid to CPRE national for funding to run a Landscape Enhancement Pilot Project. With match funding, £10,000 is available for planting projects in the 2020 calendar year.



Ash dieback.

## Branch Organisation

The Branch Executive Committee continues to have responsibility for managing our affairs and overseeing our funds. It met four times during the year, advised by a Management Sub-Committee and a Policy Sub-Committee. These sub-committees and a separate group that administers the CPRE Gloucestershire Awards all met regularly.

Our Branch Officers have remained unchanged: Patricia Broadfoot as our Chair; Richard Lloyd and David Brooke, Vice Chairmen; David Bayne, Secretary; Julian Oxley, Treasurer; and Elizabeth Bourne, Membership Secretary. The Executive Committee also benefits from the membership of our District Chairs, elected members, and representatives of kindred organisations. We have continued to maintain a small office in Gloucester. During the year we said fond farewells to Lisa Belfield our Office Manager and Planning Advisor and Lucy Blyth our Campaigns and Marketing Manager. Both these roles have been subsumed in the County Director appointment.

Our CPRE Districts continue to focus on the important work of local campaigning, particularly planning casework. In July 2019 South Cotswold and Tetbury Districts were formally merged at a combined AGM giving us a more powerful voice in this part of the County.

Our thanks go to our District Chairs and their committees – Prue Vernon, Berkeley Vale; Tom Hancock, Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury; Clive Osborne and later Simon Murray, Forest of Dean; Michael Green, North Cotswolds; Nick Dummett, South Cotswolds; Elisabeth Skinner, Stroud; and Jeremy Lodwick, Tetbury.

# Working with the wider CPRE network

We have continued to maintain good working links with both CPRE national and with the CPRE SW Regional Group. For example:

- Patricia Broadfoot was elected as a national Trustee at the national AGM and is our representative on the national County Branch Forum.
- Richard Lloyd has continued in his role as a member of the CPRE national Policy Committee and contributed to one of the working groups (on transport) developing CPRE's Policy Position on the Climate Emergency.
- Patricia Broadfoot is our formal representative on the CPRE SW Regional Group. Other officers also regularly contribute.
- We made an extensive input to the development of CPRE's new national Strategy 2020 – 2026; and we responded to the development of two 'OneCPRE' responses – on the work of the Affordable Housing Commission, and to inform the development of the CPRE Policy Position on Climate Change.



# Our Awards

Seven CPRE Gloucestershire Awards were made in 2019, the twelfth year of the scheme. The Awards celebrate projects which have brought outstanding benefits to Gloucestershire's environment, people and local communities

## 1 Bells Field, Coleford

A new 9 acre park, designed in consultation with the local community, catering for all ages, with high quality landscaping and enhanced biodiversity



## 2 Chesterton Obelisk Project

The setting of the obelisk transformed through a carefully thought out planting scheme designed with community input and implemented largely by volunteers



## 3 Maisemore milestones restoration

The Maisemore Local History Society have carefully restored three milestones on the former turnpike road from Gloucester to Worcester.



## 4 St Francis, Theescombe

A highly imaginative building project which has remodelled a Cotswold stone cottage and a garage at a lower level to create an outstanding, contemporary family home



## 5 Scarr Bandstand, Sling

A restored bandstand where local brass bands played for over 100 years and the restarting of music performances, achieved through a local community group



## 6 The Barn at Severn and Wye, Chaxhill

A former agricultural building converted to high standards providing a new public area at the Severn and Wye Smokery with retail facilities and a restaurant on the floor above



## 7 Westbury on Severn church spire

An historic church spire successfully restored and re-clad in oak shingles sourced and cleft in the Forest of Dean after 10 years of tireless fund raising



## CPRE Gloucestershire

### Summarised Statement of Financial Activities for the Year ended 31st December 2019

	2019	2018
<b>Income</b>		
Share of National Subscriptions	22,044	22,540
Investment Income & Interest	4,705	4,718
Donations & Miscellaneous	2,315	480
	<u>29,064</u>	<u>27,738</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Director & Contractors	13,003	25,429
Recruitment & Training	451	0
Postage & Telephone	639	893
Office & I.T Costs	968	2,084
Office Rent	3,467	3,467
Publicity & Fund-Raising	125	300
Publishing	4,929	5,010
Reporting Accountant	660	748
Annual General Meeting	560	750
Professional Charges	3,335	0
Insurance	660	642
Travel & Meetings	2,485	2,863
Awards Scheme	873	770
Subscriptions	89	1,467
Planning Consultancy	3,542	1,870
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust: for Severn Vision Project	2,500	4,000
Place Studio: for Neighbourhood Plans Research	2,606	3,500
	<u>40,892</u>	<u>53,793</u>
Deficit for the Year	(11,828)	(26,055)
Gain on Investments	34,441	(20,935)
General Fund brought forward	200,989	247,979
	<u>223,602</u>	<u>200,989</u>
Transfers to:		
Partnership Fund	(50,000)	0
Development Fund	(50,000)	0
Districts Fund	(30,000)	0
Training Fund	(10,000)	0
General Fund carried forward	<u>83,602</u>	<u>200,989</u>

### Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2019

<b>Assets</b>		
Investments	307,143	
Bank Account	20,896	
Debtors	5,389	
	<u>332,173</u>	
<b>less Current Liabilities</b>	<u>(9,826)</u>	
	<u>323,602</u>	
<b>Financed by</b>		
General Fund	83,602	
Fighting Fund	100,000	
Partnership Fund	50,000	
Development Fund	50,000	
Districts Fund	30,000	
Training Fund	10,000	
	<u>323,602</u>	

### Treasurer's Report

With income marginally up on the previous year, but expenditure significantly down, the Deficit for 2019 at £13,083 was just half that for 2018. Thus with (unrealised) gains on investments of £34,441, the General Fund increased by £22,358.

In view of this the trustees have decided to create four separate new Funds to embrace our planned expansion and development in the coming years. This leaves the General Fund at approximately our planned total spending for 2020, and is in line with Charity Commission guidelines for the level of undesignated reserve funds.

**Julian Oxley**  
Hon Treasurer



# CPRE Gloucestershire Trustees

The Trustees of CPRE Gloucestershire are the Honorary Officers, Elected Members of the Executive Committee and CPRE District Chairs. The CPRE North Cotswolds and Stroud Districts are not currently represented by a Trustee. In furthering the work of the charity, Trustees have been guided by the advice of the Charity Commission.

Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE (Chair)  
Mr David Bayne  
Mrs Elizabeth Bourne  
Mr David Brooke  
Mr Nick Dummett  
Major Tom Hancock  
Mr Richard Lloyd MBE  
Mr Jeremy Lodwick (to July 2019)  
Mr Simon Murray (from September 2019)  
Mr Clive Osborne (to September 2019)  
Mr Julian Oxley  
Mrs Prue Vernon

The Objects of CPRE Gloucestershire are the promotion and encouragement, for the benefit of the public, of the protection and enhancement of rural Gloucestershire and its towns and villages

## President of CPRE Gloucestershire

Mr Charles Martell

## Vice Presidents

Sir John Adye KCMG  
The Earl of Harrowby  
Professor Adrian Phillips CBE  
Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE  
The Earl of Wemyss and March



Join in.  
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Registered charity number: 248577



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