



The countryside charity
Gloucestershire

2022 Annual Review

www.cpreglos.org.uk



Chair's Statement

This is a turbulent time for our countryside. It is faced with threats from all sides - an explosion of new housing developments on our precious green fields, on the green belt and even in our AONBs; and an ever-increasing number of applications for large scale solar installations. Villages are facing cuts in bus services and the cost-of-living crisis can hit particularly hard in isolated communities. We urgently need a comprehensive rural strategy which will achieve the best possible balance between the competing pressure for homes, clean energy and food. So, it's good to know that over the past year CPRE's campaigning on the national stage has had a greater impact than ever. CPRE has highlighted the value of hedgerows, the need to reduce unachievable local authority housing targets; and the need to prioritise brownfield land for house-building. And as recent policy announcements make clear, we have been listened to.



Prof. Patricia Broadfoot CBE,
County Chair

The success of these campaigns has been made possible by the support of CPRE members who provide the resources, the lobbying, the evidence and the sheer hard work on which such results depend. CPRE's voice is taken seriously by Government because it speaks for so many people who care about the future of our countryside. As you will see from this Annual Review, CPRE Gloucestershire has played a full part in these achievements. We have planted hedgerows, picked up litter, talked to hundreds of people at county shows, lobbied MPs, responded to unwelcome planning applications, campaigned on social media and worked with partners to make the voice of the countryside heard. And our annual Awards have celebrated some of the most exciting new initiatives enhancing rural Gloucestershire.

2022 was a significant one for CPRE Gloucestershire. We were able for the first time to appoint a full-time Director. Tim Andrews came to us from a background in school-

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Chair's Statement

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teaching with outstanding expertise in the restoration of old orchards. His first year in post has injected new energy into our organisation and he has already appeared on both BBC's 'Gardeners' World' and 'Countryfile'. We were also delighted to welcome two new trustees. 2022 also saw the retirement from the trustee board of Vice Chair, David Brooke, who received a national award for his long and extensive service to CPRE Gloucestershire for which we extend our sincere thanks. On a less happy note, it also saw the death of Major Tom Hancock who served as Chair of our Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury District for more than 30 years. We were delighted to plant two trees in the grounds of Stanway House in his memory, courtesy of

one of our Vice Presidents, the Earl of Wemyss and March.

By common consent, these are challenging times for our world, our country and especially for our countryside. Our biodiversity is under grave threat and our climate is changing. We desperately need a healthy and flourishing countryside to combat these pressures. And because of this, the work of CPRE has never been more important. Thank you for all your support. I look forward to working with all our members and supporters to achieve even greater things for our glorious Gloucestershire countryside in the future.

Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE, County Chair



Our Campaigns

In January 2022 the government responded to the report of the Glover Review of National Parks and AONBs to which CPRE had made a major input. It endorsed the key recommendations for a single set of statutory purposes for National Park Authorities and AONB teams, amending the conservation purpose to include nature recovery and applying the recreation purpose to all AONBs. This will require legislation, which is unlikely in the short term but much can be achieved without it. We continued to support the work of the Cotswolds National Landscape Board and the Wye Valley AONB Partnership.

As part of the first year of the CPRE National Hedgerow Heroes Campaign, in early 2022 we successfully delivered a partnership project with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) and Friends of the Cotswolds which achieved the planting over 4km of new hedgerow across 22 farms in the county. Much of the planting was done by CPRE volunteers who were able to learn the art of hedgerow planting and ongoing maintenance.

At the end of the year we extended our campaigning ambitions to embrace orchard restoration.

We continued to engage in discussions about National Highways A417 Missing Link project. The project plans received development consent in November 2022, but work is still being progressed to enable a bid to be made for additional discretionary funds which would support environmental improvements and community benefits in the wider area affected by the new road.

Our perennial campaign to tackle the scourge of litter continued with litter clearance initiatives pursued by a number of our district groups and by the county branch.



Raising our profile

We have worked hard over the last year to let people know more about the good work that CPRE Gloucestershire does across the county. This has included engaging in different ways and formats so that our message can be heard and understood by all.

Our AGM and Annual Lecture by Baroness Young of Old Scone at the Royal Agricultural University was well attended. Guests enjoyed a summary of our work during the year and a fascinating joint lecture with the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire.

We held a number successful events for our members, supporters and friends. Over 100 people attended our open garden event at Highnam Court. This was followed by a magical music filled evening in the fabulous library of the grand house. In the later half of the year we were

privileged that Sir Henry Elwes invited us to a personal guided tour of his arboretum at Colesbourne. At the end of the year we held our ever popular carol concert. This time in Leckhampton in the snow.

We had many excellent conversations with members of the public at a number of country fairs where we had a stall, including the Stroud Show, Moreton in Marsh Show and the Frampton Fair. For the first time ever we also attended a music festival. A joint collaboration with CPRE Avon and Bristol at Inglefest allowed us to interact with a younger demographic.

We are also raising our profile by doing more to enhance our environment. In the summer we enjoyed an afternoon of litter picking with the Gloucester Brewery around the docks and Alney Island. We worked together with Katharine Lady

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Berkeley's School by planting a small copse with students on their school grounds. And the orchard restoration project in Halmore, near Slimbridge is a real highlight. Over 10 acres of orchard are being restored in our work with the Ernest Cook Trust and Orchard Revival.

We were pleased to have secured several articles in local papers, and also a number of interviews on BBC Radio Gloucestershire. These included discussions with Richard Lloyd our vice chair about our Awards and with Tim Andrews, our County Director, about the orchard restoration. Our communications with our members became more frequent with members receiving newsletters (twice in the year), regular emails, social media posts and YouTube videos.

Growing our membership

Building our membership remains a focus for the charity. We have worked hard to encourage new members to join our cause. The increased range of events and ways to get involved in CPRE's activities has encouraged more people to interact with CPRE Gloucestershire but turning that interaction into membership is a challenge. We thank a number of local businesses, including Gloucester Brewery,

Local Plans

Having up to date, sound and well-evidenced Local Plans is fundamental to achieving the right development in the right places and avoiding speculative development. CPRE has continued to work hard to influence emerging plans and plan reviews.

At the end of 2022, the Joint Core Strategy (the JCS) covering the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury local authority areas had been in place for five years and its strategic policies are technically now out of date, putting the area at even greater risk of speculative planning applications. Now retitled the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP), we were expecting to see substantial progress in 2022 with the Joint Strategic Plan Review to 2041. Progress has been very slow and consultation on options for the amount and

Stroud Brewery, Ethical Addictions Coffee and Orchard Revival who have helped to provide Gloucestershire produced goodies to encourage new members.

At the end of the year, with 661 members, CPRE Gloucestershire was the tenth largest branch in the CPRE network.

distribution of development has been delayed until spring 2023. While it is good that the separate Local Plans which sit under the JCS have now been adopted (Cheltenham Borough and Tewkesbury Borough) or in the case of Gloucester will be adopted in early 2023, progressing the JSP review is increasingly urgent.

In Stroud District, the Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate during the year and we are gearing up to take part in the Inquiry process.

In October 2022, CPRE responded to a second consultation on the review of the Forest of Dean Local Plan. That set out the option of 'dispersed' allocation of new housing rather than the previously indicated preference for a new settlement. However, we understand that there is a considerable divergence of views between councillor groups with some still favouring the new settlement option. For any option the environmental constraints within the District remain high, and there are transport bottlenecks at Highnam and Chepstow reflecting large scale commuting out of the area. It seems unlikely that anything will be resolved prior to the forthcoming May 2023 elections.

In Cotswold District, a partial update of the current local plan is being undertaken, focussing on targeted sections of the Plan, covering specific policies that the Council



Wye Valley AONB, Forest of Dean District.

believe need updating, especially those relating to tackling the climate emergency. We provided input to the first stage consultation.

Also In the Cotswolds, the Cotswolds National Landscape Board Is undertaking a limited interim review of the current statutory management plan for the AONB (2018 to 2023) to cover the period 2023-25. The aim is to align with the plan with the timeline of the government's 25-year Environment Plan and accommodate any changes in policy resulting from the Glover Review. We responded to the Board's consultation.



Planning casework

Planning applications for extensive field based solar arrays on farmland were a major concern in 2022 in the Severn Vale and into Forest of Dean District. To aid assessment of applications and help frame our responses we produced an internal guidance document on key issues to consider. In addition to visual impact and the cumulative impact of proposals we are concerned that high value farmland in terms of its food production potential should be safeguarded from development.

Cases considered in Stroud District included a project at Arlingham that was withdrawn after a successful local campaign which included CPRE and concerns by the Environment Agency about long-term security of the Severn flood defences; and at Morton Valence and Whitminster where we raised concerns over the impact on the historic conservation zone which includes the Stroudwater canal and the River Frome. This application was approved.

Three large solar sites proposed to the southeast of Newent (Forest of Dean District Council) at Murrells End, Laynes Wood and Moat Farm were objected to on grounds of adversely affecting public enjoyment of the landscape. At two of those sites there were also concerns about substantial loss of potential agricultural production. We also objected to a battery energy storage system (BESS) on the Awre peninsula, close to where a solar array application was withdrawn previously. The BESS was refused and is now subject to an appeal.

The appeal seeking 250 houses at Oakley Farm on the edge of Cheltenham, but within the Cotswolds National Landscape, dragged on into 2022. Regrettably, the development was allowed, mainly because that part of the AONB was sandwiched between other housing.

An appeal for a 500 house development at Mitton, on the north side of Tewkesbury but in Worcestershire, was dismissed. This has implications for Tewkesbury Borough as its permission had been assumed in the Joint Core Strategy: as a result the Borough Council will need to find land for an equivalent number of dwellings elsewhere.

Of the two adjacent developments in the Cotswolds National Landscape on the edge of Winchcombe, one has been permitted and the other refused. The permitted application, for 100 houses, is on a site allocated in the recently adopted Tewkesbury Local Plan, albeit for only 80 houses.

A third attempt is being made to build on land at Trueman's Farm on the eastern fringes of Gotherington – both earlier applications were refused, one at appeal. As before, we opposed this latest proposal for 45 houses as it would be damaging to the setting of the Cotswolds National Landscape and of the village and was not allocated in any local plan.

Even though the latest permitted developments have yet to be completed, Alderton has suffered two further large speculative planning applications totalling some 110 houses. As well as damage to the setting of the village and the wider Cotswolds National Landscape, allowing this number of additional houses would have an even more damaging



impact on the social fabric of this historic village. In objecting to each application we have stressed the need to take account of the cumulative effect of both.

Twynning, north of Tewkesbury and which lacks any landscape protection, has been another target for speculative developers in recent years. A proposal to build 55 houses on the edge of the village on a site which has for many years been a community woodland has now gone to appeal, with a public inquiry starting in early 2023. CPRE is supporting opposition led by the parish council.

A highly controversial application to build 35 houses in the Cotswolds National Landscape on the side of the golden valley at The Knapp in Minchinhampton was dismissed at appeal in late 2022. The dismissal was based primarily on landscape grounds given its far-reaching visibility across the valley as well as its local impact. The application had raised great concern locally and had been refused by Stroud District Council.

In the Wye Valley AONB we objected to a proposed new holiday chalet on a 'greenfield' site, citing adverse consequences for the character of the AONB and concerns about a potential for future change of use to a residential dwelling in a location where such development would be deemed unacceptable. The application was refused and an appeal has been lodged.

A proposed new development of 50 houses at Corse to which CPRE objected in 2021 was refused in April 2022 for reasons including those raised by CPRE about adverse

consequences for the setting of the Chartist settlement. While a Local Plan allocation, we raised concerns about an outline planning application for 1,030 houses on green fields to the south of Draycott, Cam. It is split between two developers, one of whom had submitted a very mediocre, cramped scheme increasing the application from 795 to 895 dwellings. The other application for 235 dwellings involves major changes to the layout of the A4135.

Proposals to further increase output from a number of quarries in the north Cotswolds remains a concern. Increased production is having a significant impact on local residents and the local environment with more and bigger lorries damaging roads and eroding verges, and significantly increased dust and noise pollution. Temple Guiting Parish Council has been leading a campaign to formally recognise the quarries as a cluster and to set production limits for the cluster rather than looking at individual planning applications and production levels for each quarry. We support that approach and have continued to support their campaign by providing expert advice.

Following objections by CPRE and others, in March 2022 Cotswold District Council refused an application for a 75 vehicle truck stop for HGVs in the Cotswolds National Landscape on the A417 north of Cirencester. In September 2022, the applicant lodged an appeal against the refusal. We have made a written submission to the Inspector who is considering the appeal, expanding on our reasons for objecting to the proposal. We will be attending the appeal hearings which commence in January 2023.



Our Awards

Our Awards are all about recognising and celebrating projects which have brought outstanding benefits to Gloucestershire's environment, people and local communities. 2022 was the 15th year of the Awards. Five were made, bringing the total to 90. They were presented by our President, Charles Martell, at our annual ceremony at the Gambier Parry Hall in Highnam. This year we had a sponsor - Savills - who supported an award to Barnwood Park reflecting a new category for projects responding to climate change.

The projects celebrated were:



Barnwood Park Environmental Improvements

Barnwood Park and Arboretum is a six hectare open space bisected by the Wotton Brook. This innovative project has reduced flood risk by increasing the flood storage capacity of the park through the excavation of wetland scrapes. Further improvements have included the creation of a wildflower meadow and planting to ensure a natural appearance of the water areas.



Ashleworth Hub

New owners of Ashleworth village shop have expanded the enterprise into the Ashleworth Hub. The original buildings have been sympathetically repurposed to provide an attractive shop, deli and post office and a small art gallery fitting round an external space that gives an outdoor extension to the café. The Hub is licenced and is now a focus for community activities. It is proving a great success.



Destination Lydney Harbour

Lydney Harbour was a thriving hub of activity transporting coal mined in the Forest of Dean. This activity ceased in the 1960s and the area became increasingly derelict. In a partnership led by Forest of Dean District Council, the harbour area has been transformed into an attractive visitor destination and its links with Lydney town greatly enhanced.



Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common Partnership Management

Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common comprise 66 hectares of calcareous grassland, geological exposures and industrial heritage from quarrying. Designated an SSSI and crossed by the Cotswold Way over 200,000 people visit the area annually. Led by Cheltenham Borough Council and the Friends of Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common with input from the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens and much community involvement, achievements include re-establishing grazing, rebuilding drystone walls and enabling access for all.

St James the Great Church, Stoke Orchard, Wall Paintings Conservation Project

The church of St James the Great was built in about 1160. Its most remarkable feature are 28 medieval wall-paintings in the nave. Between the 15th and 18th centuries they were overpainted. Exposed and first restored in the 1950s the paintings were deteriorating. They have now been meticulously cleaned and repaired so rescuing a unique cultural resource and securing its future.



Working with others

- We maintained our strong links with both CPRE national and the CPRE South West Regional Group.
- We are pleased that Simon Murray, Chair of our Forest of Dean District Group continued in his role as Chair of the National Trustee Board; and that Patricia Broadfoot was elected as national Vice Chair.
- We contributed to a number of 'OneCPRE' responses to government consultations, helping to ensure a consensus across the CPRE Network.
- We remained active members of the CPRE SW Regional Group, helping to develop a regional view on key issues across the Southwest and sharing best practice.
- Richard Lloyd is a board member of the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (LNP). Important issues considered by the LNP included preparatory work on the Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and establishing an independent Gloucestershire Climate and Carbon Fund which will have an important role in biodiversity off-setting.
- We continued to operate a tree planting grant scheme jointly with Cotswolds National Landscape Board, designed to mitigate tree losses from Ash Dieback.
- We developed our relationship with the Cotswold Canals Connected Project and the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, securing a grant from the Somerfield Trust which will be used to plant new lengths of hedge in association with the canal restoration work.
- Our relationship with FWAG continued through discussions about a possible further hedgerow initiative with them in 2023.
- We developed a Position Statement on Access to the Countryside with input from the NFU, the Ramblers and the Woodland Trust.

Our Organisation

During the year we completed our move from an unincorporated charity to that of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This is a more modern form of charity governance and we are pleased to have made the change. For transitional reasons, however, we are also retaining the unincorporated charity on a temporary 'care and maintenance' basis.

Accordingly, this Annual Review combines the activity of the two charities during 2022: that is of the earlier CPRE Gloucestershire Branch (Charity No. 248577) and of the present CPRE Gloucestershire CIO (Charity No. 1187143).

The Board of Trustees met five times during the year, concentrating on strategic and financial strategy for the charity and on the range of internal policies needed for good governance. The Board was supported by a Policy Sub-Committee, which guides our external policy and campaigns. A separate group of independent judges manages the CPRE Gloucestershire Awards.

We were sad to say farewell to our administrator Indianna Knight early in the year. Our new full time Director joined us in the spring. Our Communications Manager, Kimberly Seville and Fundraising Manager, Gill Raikes completed our small team.

Our CPRE Districts continue to champion our campaigning at a local level, particularly through their involvement in planning casework. Our thanks go to the District committee members and to their chairs: Prue Vernon, Berkeley Vale; David Bayne, Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury; Simon Murray, Forest of Dean; Steve Smith, North Cotswolds; Max Thorneycroft, South Cotswolds and Tetbury; and Elisabeth Skinner, Stroud.

Hon Treasurer's Report

In financial terms 2022, was a disappointing year, with total income down nearly 9% and expenditure up by about the same. On top of that, there was turbulence in investment markets worldwide, producing a book loss of nearly £15,000. This depletion of funds is not sustainable in the longer term, so the trustees are pursuing ways of stimulating membership and finding additional external sources of funding. However, they are determined that for the time being all our activities will continue undiminished, while recognising that this will result in further realisation of investments.

Julian Oxley
Hon Treasurer

CPRE Gloucestershire Summarised Statement of Financial Activities for the Year ended 31st December 2022

	2022	2021	
Income			
Share of National Subscriptions	20,577	22,424	
Investment Income & Interest	4,402	4,197	
Grants, Events and Donations	7,548	10,314	
	<u>32,527</u>	<u>36,935</u>	
Expenditure			
Director & Staff Costs	46,409	38,119	
Recruitment & Training	119	595	
Postage & Telephone	1,116	1,366	
Office & I.T Costs	669	2,824	
Office Rent	3,467	4,045	
Public Relations & Fund-Raising	2,769	3,916	
Publishing	4,470	2,101	
Reporting Accountant & AGM	1,240	690	
Professional Charges	1,794	1,794	
Insurance	590	541	
Travel & Meetings	680	774	
Awards Scheme	626	1,291	
Merchandise	0	1,170	
Subscriptions	66	191	
Bank Charges & Interest	43	232	
Miscellaneous	7	0	
Planning Consultancy	0	100	
Partnerships & Projects	2,670	3,926	63,675
	<u>66,735</u>	<u>63,675</u>	
Operating Deficit for the Year	(34,208)	(26,740)	
Gain/(Loss) on Investments	(14,669)	23,164	
General Fund brought forward	27,634	31,210	
Transfer from Partnership Fund	20,000	0	
Transfer from Development Fund	20,000	0	
Transfer from Districts Fund	10,000	0	
	<u>28,757</u>	<u>27,634</u>	
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2021			
Net Assets			
Investments	242,245	276,913	
Bank Accounts	3,384	22,000	
Debtors	4,015	4,998	
	249,644	303,911	
<i>less</i> Current Liabilities	(30,887)	(36,278)	
	<u>218,757</u>	<u>267,633</u>	
Financed by			
General Fund	28,757	27,633	
Fighting Fund	100,000	100,000	
Partnership Fund	30,000	50,000	
Development Fund	30,000	50,000	
Districts Fund	20,000	30,000	
Training Fund	10,000	10,000	
	<u>218,757</u>	<u>267,633</u>	

Our Trustees

The following Trustees were elected at the Annual General Meeting held in June 2022.

Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE (Chair)
Bob Brown
Miranda Chalk
David Crofts
Colin Evers
Julian Oxley (Hon. Treasurer)
Steve Smith (Vice Chair)
Richard Lloyd MBE was elected as a Vice Chair but is not a Trustee

Further Trustees were co-opted to the Board in December 2022 under Section 14 of our constitution and will be put forward for election at the AGM in 2023.

Heather MacKenzie
Richard Tyson

In furthering the work of the charity, the trustees are guided by the advice of the Charity Commission.

Our President and Vice-Presidents

We thank our President and Vice Presidents for their continued support.

President:
Charles Martell
Vice-Presidents:
The Earl of Harrowby
Professor Adrian Phillips CBE
Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE
The Earl of Wemyss and March

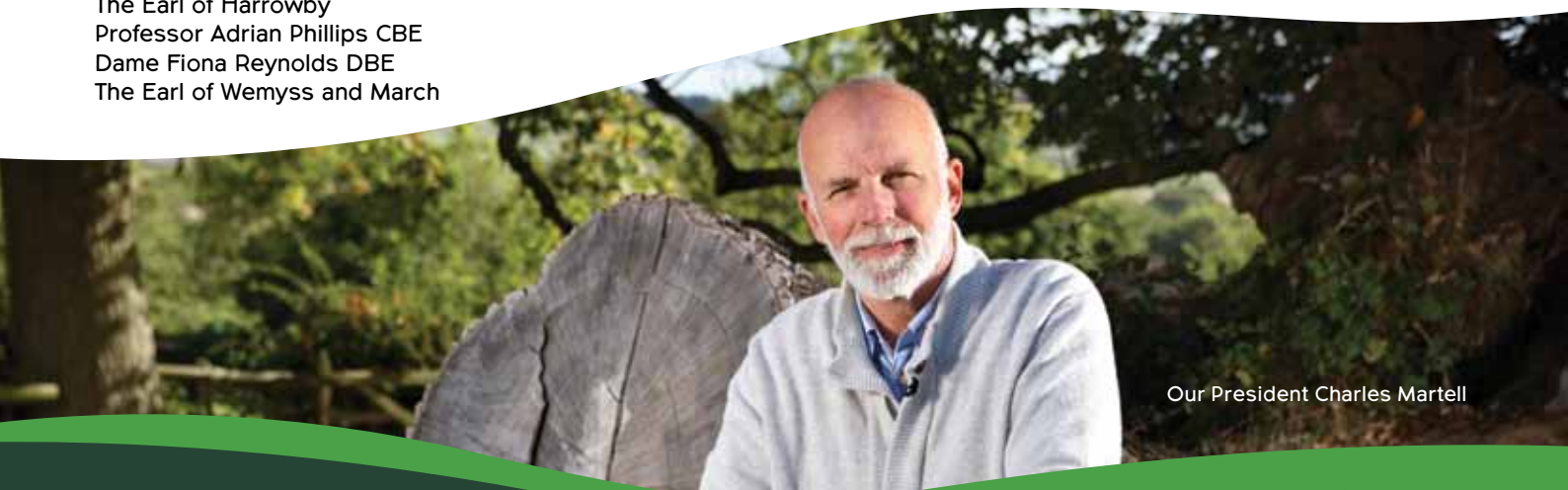
Our Districts



Our Objects

Our objects are to promote and encourage, for the benefit of the public, the improvement and protection of the English countryside - and in particular that of Gloucestershire and its towns and villages - and the better development of the rural environment

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Facebook: [@cpreglos](#)
YouTube: [CPRE Gloucestershire](#)



Our President Charles Martell

Join in.
cpre.org.uk/gloucestershire

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Registered charity number: 248577



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