

## Stand up for our local countryside

### CPRE Sussex: Manifesto for the 2021 local elections



CPRE Sussex is the countryside charity that campaigns to promote, enhance and protect the countryside for everyone's benefit, wherever they live. We work with local authorities, businesses and communities in Sussex. We stand up for the Sussex countryside so that it can continue to sustain the health and well-being of Sussex residents and visitors and provide homes for wildlife now and for future generations.

CPRE Sussex is calling for candidates in the May 2021 elections to commit to action to promote solutions to the climate and ecological emergencies.

#### **Promote solutions to the climate and ecological emergencies**

Both East and West Sussex County Councils have declared climate emergencies. The impact of climate change is clear in our daily lives. Severe weather events, erosion along the Sussex coast and flooding are all increasing. It is time for action. The coronavirus pandemic has shown the importance of creating the right balance between people and the environment. It has also highlighted the value of the countryside and green spaces for people's physical and mental health and the urgent need to reverse the trend of declining biodiversity.

Less car dependency and an end to environmentally damaging road building would benefit people's health through reduced pollution, and the planet through reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Walking, cycling and public transport should be the favoured modes of travel in Sussex. Quiet lanes and wildflowers instead of litter on roadside verges would set a standard for other councils to follow. Aviation expansion should not compromise our climate commitments or the tranquillity of the countryside.

We are calling on local election candidates to commit to:

- Set an emissions target for the whole council area (not just 'direct' council activities) of at least a 68% reduction on 1990 levels by 2030; develop and deliver a strategy to achieve this target.
- Embed climate change considerations in all policy-making, demonstrating leadership by assessing and reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from all local authority policies, actions and decisions, including infrastructure and minerals decisions and divestment from fossil fuels.
- Ensure that all strategic plans work to reverse the decline in biodiversity and protect dark skies and farmland.
- Protect nature-based solutions, such as existing woodlands, trees, meadow/pasture and hedgerows.
- Invest in more planting and restoration and prioritise work to develop nature recovery strategies.
- Support our call to national government for sustainable and deliverable housing targets.
- Support the South Downs National Park, the High Weald and Chichester Harbour Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and our iconic landscapes, protecting them from inappropriate large-scale development.
- Prioritise investment in sustainable travel including footpaths, cycleways and bus services which help people lead healthier lives while cutting carbon emissions.
- Oppose environmentally damaging road building and airport expansion.
- Support the campaign for Highways England to be responsible for litter clearance on trunk roads.
- Recognise the character of rural roads and not support new development that overloads them.
- Develop a Quiet Lanes policy and support local communities to create safer routes for travelling.