

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



The countryside charity
Sussex

CPRE Sussex is shaping a greener future for Sussex. We promote beautiful landscapes, rich in nature and greener towns and cities. We campaign for countryside and green spaces accessible to all. We champion thriving communities and sustainable development. We encourage effective responses to the climate emergency.

The Review

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Sussex's countryside charity
Part of England's CPRE network
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CPRE Sussex is an independent charity relying on membership subscriptions and donations to fund our work. The opinions expressed in the Review reflect the views and interests of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Branch.

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For membership information please contact the office as above or join online at www.cpresussex.org.uk
To find out more about our work please visit the website and sign up to receive regular email updates. This helps us reduce our overheads and reduce mailing costs.

Cover picture: One of the fabulous photographs submitted to the Brighton & Hove Tree Festival. Photographic competition 'I love this tree because..'

Photograph by Suzanne Olivante, 'Devils Dyke Watcher Willow in Summer'

"I love this sentinel tree that stands alone on the steep slope of the Devil's Dyke, braving all weathers. Often the first silhouette to reappear in the rolling mists. It stands watch in case the legendary devil returns. Small, mighty, a protective guardian and a home to lichens and mosses".

The photographic exhibition will be showing at the Jubilee Library Foyer Gallery from Monday June 3rd to Saturday 8th inclusive

Do come along!



Welcome!

It's been a non-stop first half of 2024 for CPRE Sussex. Development pressures remain relentless, and our amazing team of volunteers have responded magnificently, putting in incisive comments to drafts of Local Plans (in Horsham, Lewes, Mid Sussex and Wealden, with more to come) and to specific planning applications right across East and West Sussex. A number of applications opposed by CPRE Sussex have been turned down, including: an 800-properties scheme on a site between Southwater and Horsham outside the built-up area boundary and not allocated for development; and at the Broadford Bridge oil drilling site where the developer will now have to restore the site – a win for the countryside (and the climate).

We have also been heavily involved in making representations to the public examination of the Gatwick Airport expansion proposals. Chair Dan Osborn, successfully called for a specific climate change impacts hearing, speaking alongside many local and national experts – including lawyers, part-funded by CPRE Sussex, acting for CAGNE (the Campaign Against Gatwick Noise and Emissions). We will continue to make the case against the second runway; we suspect that a final decision might be made after the General Election.

We're readying ourselves for that election, with a draft 'manifesto' of policies that we would like Sussex MP candidates to adopt. We'll be publicising these ideas in the run-up to a likely autumn poll date.

One of the areas covered in the manifesto is water. In wake of widespread problems with both supply and sewage spillages right across Sussex, we've launched a new campaign calling on local authorities to require water companies to upgrade sewers and water treatment works before major new developments start, as a condition of planning permission.

Our manifesto emphasises the need to quickly get more solar panels on roofs and car parks – to help cut energy bills and carbon, and to reduce pressures for landscape-scale solar farms. We've been working with CPRE Hampshire and researchers at the University of Southampton to produce research that will show how much solar radiation falls on each and every single rooftop in the area, to identify the real priority 'hotspots' for installing PV panels.

The year-to-date hasn't all been about poring over plans, wrestling with policies or undertaking research however. We've also had the joy of getting out to plant trees and hedgerows, in locations both urban and rural. Fantastic volunteer teams have completed hundreds of metres of planting on the edge of the Ashdown Forest, while we've continued to support Brighton & Hove residents to 'Plant Your Postcode'. Our new research, identifying tens of thousands of possible new sites for street trees in the city, will underpin future planting plans; there's no shortage of enthusiasm for trees there either, as the huge support for our inaugural Tree Festival in May shows.

Our public celebrations will continue in September, with the return of the Countryside Day, our celebration of all that's great about rural Sussex. We'll be back at the Knepp Estate on 7th September, as part of England-wide CPRE events – starting to build towards the national centenary in 2026.

Paul Steedman, Director CPRE Sussex
June 2024

Annual Report 2023

Chairman's Report for the year ended 31st December 2023

This year has been busy for all involved in CPRE Sussex as we work to shape a greener future for Sussex. Our members, supporters, project partners and dedicated volunteers have once again helped to ensure we can protect and promote our precious countryside and urban green spaces.

Opposing inappropriate development

In 2023, we continued to oppose inappropriate development which threatens our precious landscapes and fails to meet a genuine local need. We opposed plans for a holiday park in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), called for greater use of brownfield sites and challenged local plans across Sussex.

Early in 2023 we celebrated as Center Parcs withdrew its bid for a holiday park in the High Weald AONB. However, just a few months later, we were faced with another wholly inappropriate application for a holiday park in the same AONB. Thankfully, a co-ordinated effort by conservation charities, campaign groups and dedicated volunteers saw the Normanhurst Estate application refused by the local planning committee.

In December, we joined others who were against the 1,450-house 'Cuckstye' scheme. The application pre-empted, and appeared to subvert, the review and update of Mid Sussex's District Plan. We will continue to support the Stop Cuckstye Action Group ahead of a planning examination in summer 2024.

This year we have also opposed national planning policies which could weaken protection for green space and threaten protected landscapes, including proposals to relax rules around converting redundant agricultural buildings into residential properties.

We also called for new development to take place on Brownfield sites after a report by the national CPRE charity revealed there are more than 700 brownfield sites across East and West Sussex, covering almost 1,000 acres. That is enough land to build more than 23,500 homes without destroying precious landscapes.

Climate

The climate crisis is a major threat facing the Sussex countryside. In 2023, we continued to represent members' views on a wide range of environmental matters and support common-sense approaches to renewables which protect our beautiful landscapes.

In May, we launched our Rooftop Renewables campaign calling for the installation of solar panels to be a

requirement of planning permission for all car parks and new builds in Sussex. This followed research, commissioned by CPRE and carried out by the UCL Energy Institute, which found the majority of required solar capacity could be installed on existing buildings and car parks. By making use of rooftops, we can generate renewable energy while protecting valuable landscapes. Six Sussex MPs have already shown their support for the campaign by signing up to become Parliamentary Rooftop Solar Champions. They are Caroline Ansell (Eastbourne), Caroline Lucas (Brighton Pavilion), Maria Caulfield (Lewes), Sally-Ann Hart (Hastings and Rye), Sir Peter Bottomley (Worthing West) and Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham).

In November, we were intensely disappointed to have to object to elements of plans for a new offshore wind farm. We back an urgent move to renewable energy sources and, in principle, would be supportive of the sensitive expansion of the Rampion offshore wind farm. However, we had major concerns over how the Rampion 2 public consultation was run and the impact on landscape and nature of onshore cabling and grid connection works.

Throughout 2023 we have also kept more than a watching brief on the water quantity and quality issues affecting districts across the county.

This year has also seen us oppose plans which would further threaten the health and wellbeing of Sussex's residents, countryside and wildlife.

We have continued to work against the unsustainable and harmful bid for a second runway at Gatwick Airport. Gatwick Airport expansion and that proposed and in hand at other airports would make achieving net zero targets almost impossible. Technologies to deliver net zero in aviation don't yet exist at scale and taxpayers will be left footing the bill for cleaning up the effects of carbon. A second runway would also lead to increased air and noise pollution, risking the health and wellbeing of residents. A planning inquiry into the bid will take place in 2024.

In October, we were dismayed at the Balcombe High Court decision which will see residents face another three years of disruption from oil exploration. Oil



The Countryside Day, visitors enjoying the gardens at Knepp

exploration in Sussex has no public benefit and can only harm the unique and beautiful landscape of the High Weald. It is clear planning policy needs tightening to reflect the latest climate change advice and we will continue to support Frack Free Balcombe, and all the residents, in their fight against these plans.

Planting urban trees

In 2023, we continued our work to increase urban tree cover through our Plant Your Postcode scheme and other initiatives.

The Forgotten Places planting project ended in March with a herculean final period of work on the Bristol Estate. As part of the Queen's Green Canopy and the HM Commemorative Fund, we also submitted a successful joint bid with Brighton & Hove City Council's arboriculture team to plant 110 trees across the city.

To help encourage the next generation of tree lovers, in March, we launched a series of free tree resources for children. The activity and factsheets are designed to support learning from Key Stages 1 to 3.

Countryside Day

In September, we celebrated the culmination of our 50th anniversary with our first Countryside Day, hosted by the Knepp Estate. Hundreds of people flocked to the event to celebrate all that is best about the Sussex countryside. Plans are already underway for the next Countryside Day on 7th September 2024.

Thanks to those who make our work possible. I would like to thank our fantastic staff, volunteers, trustees, members and supporters for your invaluable support throughout 2023. Without your support, expertise and generosity, our work would not be possible. I thank our loyal and long serving President, Lord Egremont, who stepped down at the AGM after 42 years of service and support to the Charity, he will be much missed. I would also like to thank Julian Hill, our Treasurer, who stepped down in the Autumn after 8 years of service. We also thank Vic Ient for his hard work on behalf of the Charity particularly his work relating to the South Downs National Park.

I would also like to pay tribute to Geoffrey Mantle and Valerie Kippax, both long-term friends of CPRE Sussex who left us generous legacies in 2023.

Trustee's Report

For the year ended 31st December 2023

Working Names: CPRE Sussex and
CPRE Sussex Countryside Trust

Constitution, objectives and activities

CPRE Sussex is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and its governing document is "The Constitution of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, Sussex Branch CIO" registered with the Charity Commission on 8th April 2014, charity number 1156568. The Branch is restricted by its Constitution from undertaking any substantial permanent trading activities.

The objects of the CIO are to promote and encourage for the benefit of the public the improvement, protection and preservation of the countryside of Sussex and its towns and villages and the environmentally better development of the same.

Trustees

The Trustees who have served during the year and at the date of the Report were: Julian Hill, Penny Hudd, David Johnson, John Kay, Prof Daniel Osborn, Sally Pavey, Dr Roger Smith, Jill Sutcliffe, Katherine Sykes, Corinne Stuart, Deborah Speirs, Elizabeth Alexander, Monty Larkin, Carol Rue (co-opted), Joshua Lelliott (co-opted). New trustees are appointed after a review of the skills required and are drawn from individuals who have relevant backgrounds. When appropriate the trustees consult other relevant organisations for nominations to the committee. New trustees are provided with an introduction to the Charity.

Registered address: Brownings Farm, Blackboys, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 5HG

Bankers: CAF Bank Ltd, PO Box 289, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA

Independent Examiner: Mr M Partridge, FCA, Chariot House Ltd, 44 Grand Parade, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 9QA

Investment adviser and nominee company: Charles Stanley & Co Ltd, 55 Bishopsgate London EC2N 3AS

Public benefit reporting

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

Financial review and reserves

The Chairman's report included in these accounts gives a full description of the activities and results for the year ended 31st December 2023. The Trustees consider that the level of reserves is adequate to support current activities for the next three to four years and are actively reviewing future funding to ensure that CPRE Sussex will continue to be an effective voice for the future (please refer to the reserves policy in the Notes). The Trustees review financial and other risks on a regular basis.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution, requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently,
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP,
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures, disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate that the charity will continue business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enables them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Committee of Trustees
on 19th April 2024 and signed on its behalf by
Professor Daniel Osborn, Chair



Abridged Financial Information

Statement of Financial Activities for the year to 31st December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023
	£	£	£
Incoming Resources			
Membership Subscriptions	38,421	–	38,421
Investment Income	3,651	–	3,651
Legacies	405,200		405,200
Donations	23,488	–	23,488
Chalk Cliff Trust	4,950	–	4,950
Forgotten Places Grant	–	21,688	21,688
Queen's Canopy Grant	–	60,869	60,869
Plant your Postcode Brighton	–	1,498	1,498
Brighton & Hove Tree Festival	–	2,000	2,000
CAGNY donation	–	1,200	1,200
Gift Aid on Donations	1,894	–	1,894
Other Income	9,493	–	9,493
Total Incoming Resources	487,097	87,255	574,352
Resources Expended			
Raising Funds	9,262	–	9,262
Charitable Activities	54,148	89,262	143,410
Total Resources Expended	63,410	89,262	152,672
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources before Transfers	423,687	(2,007)	421,680
Gains on Investment Assets	4,546	–	4,546
Net Movements in Funds	428,233	(2,007)	426,226
Fund Balance at 1st January 2023	134,606	15,933	150,539
Fund Balances at 31st December 2023	562,839	13,926	576,765

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2023

Fixed Assets	£
Tangible Assets	2,090
Investments	117,855
Total Fixed Assets	119,945
Current Assets	
Stocks	223
Debtors, Prepayments and deposits	134,843
Short term deposits	322,569
Cash at bank and in hand	9,636
Total Current Assets	467,271
Less Creditors	
Amounts falling due within one year	(10,451)
Net Current Assets	456,820
Net Assets	576,765
Income Funds	
Restricted	13,926
Unrestricted	562,839
Total	576,765

These figures are extracted from the full Trustees' Report and financial statements. The Trustees' Report and financial statements were approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf on 19th April 2024. They will be submitted to the Charity Commission. These summarised financial statements may not contain sufficient information to gain a complete understanding of the financial affairs of CPRE Sussex CIO. The full Trustees' Report, Independent Examiner's Report and Financial Statements may be obtained from CPRE Sussex CIO, Brownings Farm, Blackboys, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 5HG.

Joshua Lelliot



Let us know what you think

We'd like to know what your priorities are to help us to focus our work on the issues, events and projects that are most important to our members

Name (optional)

Please select the top 4 subjects you would most like to hear about:

- ☐ Affordable housing
- ☐ Airport expansion
- ☐ Climate change
- ☐ Education and training
- ☐ Events (walks, talks etc.)
- ☐ Housing & industrial developments
- ☐ Landscape use and farming
- ☐ Mineral extraction and waste
- ☐ Planning issues
- ☐ Renewable energy
- ☐ Supporting residents & other organisations
- ☐ Transport
- ☐ Tree and hedgerow planting projects
- ☐ Urban greening
- ☐ Water issues
- ☐ Wildlife
- ☐ Other:

Why did you join CPRE Sussex?

What do you most value about being a member?

How would you like to hear from us?

How do you prefer to receive information about the work of CPRE Sussex?

- ☐ Email ☐ Post ☐ Phone ☐ Text

If you would like to receive printed material, would you be willing to increase your membership fee to cover the cost of producing this?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

How often would you like to hear from CPRE Sussex?

- ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually ☐ Other

OPTIONAL - please tell us about you.

This information will be anonymised and only used to inform us how representative the Charity is of the Sussex population and will not be retained on file.

Age range

- ☐ 18-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45
☐ 45-60 ☐ 60-70 ☐ 70+

Gender

- ☐ Man ☐ Woman ☐ Non-binary
☐ Prefer to self-describe, below:

Ethnicity

- ☐ Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh
☐ Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African
☐ Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups
☐ White
☐ Other ethnic group

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please return to:

**Lesley Wilson, CPRE Sussex, Brownings Farm
Blackboys, East Sussex, TN22 5HG**



Invitation to the AGM

Please join us at the Annual General Meeting 2024. Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the members of CPRE Sussex will be held on Tuesday, 2nd July at 11.00am (Doors open at 10.30am for refreshments) at the Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre, New Barn Road, Amberley, Arundel BN18 9LT in Humphrey's Barn.

You are warmly invited to come along and meet us at this glorious Sussex gem, hear about our previous year and exciting plans for the future.

We have a fantastic speaker joining us, Prof Clive Webb, historian and writer. Clive will share with us his enthusiasm and knowledge of Sussex through his fascinating talk 'The Invention of Sussex'.

We invite you to relax and enjoy a delicious buffet lunch and join the 'Curator's Tour' a walk around the site taking in the history of this old working chalk quarry (45-60 minutes).

We very much look forward to seeing you there.

Please complete and return this form including a cheque if needed to Lesley Wilson, CPRE Sussex, Brownings Farm, Blackboys, East Sussex, TN22 5HG by Tuesday, 25th June 2024

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS THROUGHOUT

I am attending the AGM

(It would be helpful to know if you will just be attending the AGM or will also be staying for lunch).

Name/s _____

email/s _____

- ☐ I am/we are attending the AGM
☐ I am/we are staying for lunch (£17.50 per person)
☐ I enclose a cheque for £ _____
(payable to CPRE Sussex)

Please note any allergies or special dietary requirements:

I am/we are joining the Museum Curator's Tour

☐ Yes ☐ No

ABSENTEE VOTING FORM

I am unable to attend the AGM but would like to vote on the Resolutions below

Resolution	For	Against	Abstain
To approve and sign the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting 2023			
To receive The Annual Report and Accounts for year ended 31st December 2023			
To elect Joshua Lelliott as Trustee & Honorary Treasurer			
To re-elect those Trustees who are retiring by rotation in accordance with the CIO Constitution:			
Penny Hudd			
Dan Osborn			
Sally Pavey			
To re-elect Prof Dan Osborn as Chair for a period of one year			
To re-elect David Johnson as Vice Chair for a period of one year			

PROXY VOTING FORM

I am appointing the Chair of the meeting as my proxy vote on the Resolutions on my behalf.

I, being a member of CPRE Sussex (the 'Charity'), appoint the Chairman of the meeting as my proxy to vote for on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Company to be held on Tuesday, 2nd July and at any adjournment of the meeting, on the resolutions set out above, except where I have indicated otherwise by completing the 'Resolution Choices', and on any other resolutions as the Chairman thinks in his absolute discretion fit.

Signature _____

Date _____

Please complete and return this form to be received no later than 6pm on Tuesday, 25th June 2024 to
Lesley Wilson, CPRE Sussex, Brownings Farm,
Blackboys, East Sussex, TN22 5HG
Lesley.wilson@cpresussex.org.uk Thank you.