



## DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CPRE SUSSEX ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Saturday, 5 July 2025, 11:00 at

Plumpton Village Hall, 1 West Gate, Plumpton Green, East Sussex BN7 3BQ

Present: Dan Osborn, David Johnson, Corinne Stuart, Joshua Lelliott, Paul Steedman, Debbie Charlton, Nancy Duckels, Linda Grange, Robert Cheesman, Sally Bugden, Clive Webb, Judy Marshall, William Marshall, Morag Warrack, Michael Brown, Judith Hayward, Felicity Tannous, Geoffrey Sear, Laurence Keeley, John Harmer, Sally Milne, Corinne Attwood, James Gowans, Penny Hudd, Lizzie Deane, Robert Park, Heather Sickelmore, Sue Sickelmore, Catherine Cross, Katherine Sykes, Rebecca Murphy, Sean T Murphy, Jeanette Eason, Jill Sutcliffe

Item	Title	Action
1.0	<b>Welcome</b> Dan Osborn, Chair welcomed all to the meeting and along with other 'housekeeping' details asked for all mobile phones to be turned off. Dan informed all attendees that only members can vote.	
2.0	<b>Apologies for Absence (26):</b> Mrs A Mays-Smith, Mrs P Turner, Mrs E Hart, Mr D Stickells, Mr C Mitchell, Mr M Chart, Mrs E Stanley, Miss F Hills, Mr N Beattie, Mr K Kendrick, Mr D Crundwell, RM Green, Julia Tingle, Jane Hlisnikowski, Barnaby Green, Diane Elson, Sally Pavey, Marilyn Rawson-Ekblom, Viviane Doussy, Tony Whitbread, David Pierson, Iona Price, Tony Bennett, Tracey Chaplin, Roger Smith, Fiona Handcock	
3.0	<b>Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting</b>	
3.1	There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the AGM 2024. An email received after the AGM 2024 queried appointments of President and Vice President. This task will be taken up by the new Chair. DO proposed to approve and sign MB to second and show of hands. <b>Resolution to approve and sign the Minutes of the 2024 AGM:</b>	
3.2	Proposed: Dan Osborn    Seconded: Michael Brown The meeting voted unanimously in favour of approving the Minutes. In addition - postal/electronic votes received: For 16; Against 0; Abstain 0 The minutes were signed by Dan Osborn.	
4.0	<b>Chair's Report – Dan Osborn</b> Dan guided members through his powerpoint presentation with the main points being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A27 bypass cancellation – still issues to resolve</li> <li>• New housing targets – Local Plans on hold</li> <li>• NPPF and Standard Method – tilted balance; affordability</li> <li>• Planning workshop – and more workshops/training opportunities to come</li> <li>• Rampion 2 - poor Consultation on surface works</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gatwick – would have been refused but still ongoing. Dan cited the importance of working with partners. Working with CAGNE regarding Gatwick expansion. CPRE Sussex concentrated on the climate aspect which is pivotal in why the expansion has not currently been fully approved.</li> <li>• Rooftop Solar mapping – remarkable boost; Government now agrees and new home</li> <li>• First Tree Festival in 2024 and the 2025 festival almost complete.</li> <li>• Second Countryside Day – lessons to learn and act on. 2025 Countryside Day will be held at Knepp on Saturday, 6 September.</li> <li>• South Downs Network – hosting this valuable partnership activity.</li> </ul> <p>Current challenges are the new Government with its very metropolitan outlook and its aims to scrap environmental protections and schemes.</p> <p>The upcoming Mayoral elections where there is a lack of democratic accountability. Over development is a real risk unless we can influence the Mayoral office.</p> <p>Dan thanked David Johnson for his support in his role of Vice Chair, Paul Steedman for being an excellent director and trustees for their work and help in creating new working groups.</p> <p>Dan informed the meeting that Michael Brown is stepping away from the planning role in Mid Sussex. Dan thanked Michael for his input into a huge variety of applications, resulting in at least one national campaign.</p> <p>Dan thanked Marilyn Rawson-Ekblom who has been awarded the ‘CPRE Everyday Excellence Award’ but was unfortunately not able to collect her certificate at the AGM. Thanks were also sent to Roger Smith (who chairs PSG), Nick Daines, Jill Sutcliffe and John Kay were also thanked for their very high-quality responses to planning applications.</p> <p>Dan welcomed new members of staff: Maria Tomalova joined us at the start of the year as Planning Campaigner; her expertise is landscape planning and strategic planning. Following Lesley’s stepping down Sarah Gabriel has been appointed Members, Supporters and Fundraising Senior Officer and Nancy Duckels has been appointed Campaigns and Communications Manager.</p> <p>Dan thanked Deborah Speirs, Trustee, who resigned during 2024 and Penny Hudd for organising the Tree Festival covering the area of the Living Coast. This created positive engagement with communities and covers both our celebrate and regenerate categories. The office staff were also thanked.</p>	
5.0	<p><b><u>Director’s Report – Paul Steedman</u></b></p> <p>Paul presented a PowerPoint presentation focusing on the successes and campaigns of CPRE Sussex during 2024:</p> <p>Work on right now: Planning &amp; Infrastructure Bill – Government does not understand the value of nature and habits. The Bill will remove protection for nature and environment. Large</p>	

charities are working in coalition on amendments to the Bill. The Bill is currently in the Lords which may result in changes before it returns to the Commons.

Planning wins:

Appeal dismissed re. Goring Green Gap. Thanks to Bill Freeman and his colleagues who have been working on this for many years.

Stubcroft Farm on the Manhood Peninsula – appeal refused due to flood risk. Thanks to Jill Sutcliffe for her work.

Solar Farm, Manhood Peninsula. Maria Tomalova and Jill Sutcliffe worked to protect high grade agricultural land and a habitat for water voles. Maria attended and spoke at the planning committee meeting; the application was refused.

Bolney – Michael Brown assisted residents in a case of inappropriate use of land (processing of building waste within a National Landscape) – planning appeal refused.

Our small organisation has a big impact on protecting land and helping people to respond to applications. A training programme is currently being created and will be rolled out this year.

New Sussex-wide mayor to be elected in May next year with no sense yet of who this will be. CPRE Sussex starting to think about how to influence the mayoral office and responded to the recent consultation. Mayor responsibilities include strategic planning which could be good news - but there are concerns that environment is not high on the agenda for the Mayor's office and that the countryside will be second fiddle to urban areas. CPRE Sussex believe Town and Parish Councils need to have a larger role to represent local opinion.

We will shortly be contacting members to find out what is important about Sussex to them now and in the future to support us in working with the new mayor.

A great win on roof-top solar: from 2027 new build houses will have to have solar on rooftops. Hopefully this will reduce the need to install solar panels onto fields. Roof top solar project with Southampton University has garnered interest from local councils & communities.

Sewage: We have been collaborating with and adding our voice to other campaigning organisations for clean waterways. CPRE Sussex current campaign is highlighting the need for adequate sewage infrastructure before new buildings can be occupied. This issue has been picked up by a number of local authorities and is now being discussed within Westminster & water companies.

Thank you to Penny Hudd for organising the 2025 Tree Festival. Forty-plus events took place across two weekends in June. Some of these run by CPRE Sussex and others by community organisations. 200 additional people joined our mailing list during the tree festival period, raising our profile considerably.

	<p>Last winter we worked with businesses and arranged for corporate volunteers to plant hedgerows. We worked with Brighton &amp; Hove Albion FC and The Women’s Rugby World Cup. One tree per Rugby World Cup team has been planted within the Brighton &amp; Hove area.</p> <p>Paul added that we couldn’t accomplish this without our members and volunteers. Moving forward we are looking to increase membership to gain more influence and impact. Paul asked all members to encourage friends and relatives to become members of the charity to aid this growth.</p>	
6.0	<p><b><u>Treasurers Report – Joshua Lelliott</u></b></p> <p>Joshua reported that we enter 2025 in a solid financial position. Looking ahead, reports show the charity’s costs will be higher than its income, however the charity has a fresh five-year-plan and we are building our membership base.</p> <p>At year end income was £99,000 and unrestricted funds stood at £86,000. Membership income was a little down and this needs to be improved. Grant income is also lower however the new staff post for fundraising will help this. The annual appeal received more donations than in the previous year and the charity received a small legacy income. Investments performed better than forecast.</p> <p>Unrestrictive reserves are £546,000 (comfortably above the reserves policy). In early 2025 £125,000 was allocated to two staff roles.</p> <p>Joshua asked members if they had any questions on the 2024 accounts:</p> <p>Q: Where are staff salaries? A: In the line title ‘charitable activities’</p> <p>Q: Should ‘Total 2023’ read 2024? A: Yes, this is an error and should say 2024</p> <p>Paul Steedman closed with a summary of the financial year.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Resolution to adopt the Financial Report for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024:</b>  <b>Proposer: Dan Osborn    Seconder: David Johnson</b>  Attending members: Unanimous  Postal/Electronic Vote    For: 16    Against: 0    Abstain: 0  Dan Osborn confirmed the Resolution approved.</p>	
7.0	<p><b><u>The Election of Officers and Trustees</u></b></p> <p><b>a. To re-elect those Trustees retiring by rotation in accordance with the CIO</b>  <b>Constitution: Penny Hudd, Prof Dan Osborn and David Johnson:</b>  <b>Proposed: Dan Osborn                      Seconded: Lizzie Deane</b>  Attending members unanimous  Postal/Electronic: For: 16                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0  Dan Osborn declared the resolution approved.</p>	

	<p><b>b. To appoint Prof Clive Webb as Trustee</b></p> <p>Dan Osborn invited David Johnson to introduce Prof. Clive Webb to the meeting, who in turn invited Prof. Clive Webb to give a brief outline of his interests and qualifications for the role.</p> <p><b>Proposed: David Johnson      Seconded: Katherine Sykes</b></p> <p>Attending members unanimous</p> <p>Postal/Electronic: For: 16      Against: 0      Abstain: 0</p> <p>Dan Osborn declared the resolution approved.</p> <p><b>c. To appoint Corinne Stuart as Chair of the Charity for a 1-year period</b></p> <p><b>Proposed: Dan Osborn      Seconded: Penny Hudd</b></p> <p>Attending members unanimous</p> <p>Postal/Electronic: For: 16      Against: 0      Abstain: 0</p> <p>Dan Osborn declared the resolution approved.</p> <p>Chair of the meeting passed to Corinne Stuart.</p> <p><b>e. To appoint Dan Osborn as Vice Chair for a 1-year period</b></p> <p><b>Proposed: Michael Brown      Seconded: David Johnson</b></p> <p>Attending members unanimous, with one exception against.</p> <p>Postal/Electronic: For: 16      Against: 0      Abstain: 0</p> <p>Corinne Stuart declared the resolution approved.</p> <p>Corinne Stuart asked for the approval of members to all appointments above en-bloc. The membership voted unanimously in favour with one exception.</p>	
8.0	<p><b><u>Presentation to the outgoing Chair and Vice Chair, followed by Any Other Business and Q&amp;A:</u></b></p> <p>Paul Steedman thanked Dan Osborn and David Johnson for all their work as Chair and Vice Chair respectively during his 2-year appointment. Paul referred to David’s work within the community of Shoreham and Dan’s work on the Gatwick Airport expansion. Paul added that both had been very supportive. Dan and David were presented with a gift of wine. Paul went on to thank Debbie Charlton, Administrator for her work and presented her with The CPRE Everyday Excellence Award certificate and flowers.</p> <p><b><u>Questions and Answers:</u></b></p> <p>Sally Bugden – fighting massive development locally and Lewes is under enormous pressure. Currently 150 houses are being built in Wivelsfield Green and a possibility of 600 more. Sally doesn’t see CPRE Sussex aiding campaign groups. She highlighted the work of other groups supporting local campaigns, such as the Community Planning Alliance – and their report ‘homes for everyone’. CPRE Sussex need a high profile ‘Stop the Building!’ campaign.</p> <p>Catherine Cross – In Lindfield brown field sites are not being prioritised over green field sites. Six years ago, a school shut and a planning application for flats on the site was refused by Mid</p>	

Sussex. A planning application for 90 houses has since been approved on green field, yet the brown field site remains undeveloped. Catherine would like to see CPRE Sussex campaigning to develop brown field sites and not green field.

Linda Grange agreed with Catherine Cross. CPRE Sussex needs to be more 'out there' through local groups which will bring in membership. Dan Osborn responded that John Kay is the planning lead volunteer in Lewes and that he would like to see more 'countryside defenders' in the future. Dan encouraged Sally Bugden and the Ringmer PC representative to attend the Lewes AGM later this month to discuss this.

Dan Osborn asked Michael Brown if he would like to comment: Michael responded that there are things we can and cannot influence. CPRE Sussex should concentrate on local plans in order to influence where the strategic housing should be, ie. brown field.

Jill Sutcliffe added that she lives in the far west of Sussex. A local man kept a diary/record of all the wildlife he saw from his house. Jill was able to use this information to assist in the removal of this land from the Local Plan.

Director Paul Steedman added that these were fair and reasonable challenges, and we are thinking more about what we can do for local campaigning groups. The Board recently held an away day and one outcome was to focus on 'inform, enable and empower all people in Sussex'. Recent investment in staff will help us to facilitate this.

Jeanette Eason added that we are not linking these groups together and believes that CPRE Sussex needs to be the link to pull them together.

Morag Warrack asked how many members CPRE has; Paul Steedman replied that CPRE Sussex has around 1000 members and 1600 supporters, but was not able to supply the national figure.

Michael Brown added that whether members are national or local there is no point in either's existence unless it can influence policy and outcomes. CPRE cannot be against 'everything' and needs to make positive contributions to maintain influence.

David Johnson agreed that CPRE needs to make positive contributions not negative. Devolution is a concern where there are no local plans. Local plans are a current area of confusion. If CPRE's aim is to help shape the future of Sussex it needs to make a connection with community groups to shape this together within unitarisation. Despite a small membership, Sussex is one of the largest local CPREs in the country. It is possible for CPRE Sussex to lead organisations in Sussex to achieve what we want. CPRE Sussex previously ran a campaign 'Making Places', working with and making a difference to small communities. We need to make thriving villages – it's not all about planning.

**Any Other Business:**

Bob Park recently attended a CPRE Sussex event where a titled gentleman thanked CPRE Sussex for stopping development within his area. Mr Park reflected on the fact that everyone needs to

	<p>live somewhere and that perhaps even his own house might be considered ‘inappropriate development’; CPRE need to ensure they have a balanced view, Supporting all people.</p> <p>Jeanette Eason asked for templates she could use with facts and figures.</p> <p>Morag Warrack asked members at the meeting who live in West Sussex around the Horsham area could sign her petition for the ‘20 is plenty scheme’ in Storrington which CPRE Sussex is supporting.</p> <p>Corinne Stuart formally closed the meeting at 13:15</p>	
9.0	<p><b><u>Ian Everest – The Ouse Valley – it’s past life and time.</u></b></p> <p>After lunch Corinne Stuart introduced and welcomed Ian Everest to give a presentation on ‘The Ouse Valley’, featuring old photographs and cine film.</p>	

Signed ..... [Date]