



From the Chair, on behalf of the committee

It has been another busy year for CPRE, the countryside charity, and CPRE Derbyshire, mainly due to the government looking at changing some of the key principles and legislation in respect of the current planning system.

These changes include trying to remove some of the important protections and the voice of local communities in raising objections to large scale industrial development and housing projects in the countryside.

Whether it is under the guise of National Infrastructure Projects or the new proposed legislation in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill of National Development Management Policies (NDMPs), the proposals give government the authority that NDMPs take precedence over local development plans. This is something which we are totally opposed to.

At CPRE Derbyshire, we have continued to monitor, review and submit objections to developments that we think are detrimental to the countryside, across all eight districts of Derbyshire that we cover, with the exception of applications in the Peak District National Park, which are covered by CPRE Peak District and South Yorkshire (CPRE PDSY).

In addition for some strange historic reasons, CPRE PDSY also cover six parishes in the north of North East Derbyshire and we have asked for these areas to be returned us to avoid having two interfaces with North East Derbyshire District Council.

We still have one committee member allocated to covering applications from each of the eight districts. The results of which are fed into our Planning Sub-Committee under our Vice Chair, Isabella Stone. From this meeting we make decisions on which applications we are going to raise objections against, and which we are not.

From the Chair, continued

This year we have continued to see a number of proposals for very large-scale solar farms, notably in South Derbyshire, North East Derbyshire, Amber Valley and Bolsover.

We successfully defended the appeal of the developer on the Alfreton Solar Farm proposal with the support of Amber Valley Borough Council, Save the Alfreton Countryside and other like-minded groups. This also led to the developer to commit to withdrawing their application for another large scale solar farm proposal in Shirland, the next village along.

CPRE National raised two very interesting reports in this space, one on food security which stated too much good agricultural land was being allocated to house building or to large scale solar farms, and that we need to protect our best agricultural land for growing food. The second one was issued at the end of May 2023 on Rooftop Renewables, which stated that 60% of the solar power the country needs can be sited on rooftops. We need to help shift the mindset of the UK Solar Industry to a rooftop/ carpark first approach.



As mentioned in previous annual reports, we have been running the Three Counties (3C) Project for the last 24 months, and this sadly has now come to an end .

This project, for the first fourteen months, funded one day a week of social media/ website updates for our Group and one day of community engagement and volunteer co-ordination recruitment. We have continued to see significant increases in followers (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and better engagement with their users. It is local articles that still draw the most interest from our followers.

The last ten months of the 3C Project has been focused on running the Hedgerow Heroes Project. This delivered 2.2 km of hedgerows (planting and laying) across eleven sites in Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, and introduced a large number of new volunteers to CPRE East Midlands Groups. Overall the Project was seen to be a great success and we applied for further grants to run similar projects in 2024. Unfortunately the CPRE Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire bids were unsuccessful, but other CPRE groups will receive circa £0.5m to fund their projects in 2024.

I would like to thank Lorraine Ray, Lewis Townsend and Eleanor Cheetham for the support they have given CPRE Derbyshire , CPRE Nottinghamshire and CPRE Lincolnshire over the last two years and wish them every success for the future. On the positive side, Lewis is now working for the central CPRE team, so we will continue to work with him going forwards.

Continued ...

Your AGM invitation

I very much hope you will be able to join us in person at our forthcoming Annual General Meeting at Carsington Water, near Ashbourne, on Saturday 22nd July 2023 between 10am and 2pm.

The event is free to all members plus their guests and includes a talk, a short walk around parts of the reservoir, a buffet lunch and a quick AGM . Carsington have provided us with free parking on the day too, so no need to pay for that, just let us know your car registration on arrival.

If you are able to attend, please RSVP by email to committee@cprederbyshire.org.uk and let us know how many are coming, so we can then use this information for catering numbers. Could you also please let us know if you have any dietary requirements.

I look forward to seeing you there.

From the Chair, continued

We have also managed to recruit a few more volunteers in 2023 to enable others to retire or move onto to different things.

I would like to announce that Isabella Stone, CPRE Derbyshire's Vice Chair is retiring from the committee at this years AGM. Isabella has been Vice Chair for a number of years, previously the Chair of CPRE PDSY, served on the Nominations Committee for electing Trustees onto the main Board of the National Charity and led our Planning Sub-Committee for the last fifteen months.

She has been a great support to me as Chair over the last two years and has helped me navigate into the National organisation effectively with her sound advice. On behalf of us all I would like to wish Isabella a second happy retirement!



**Isabella Stone,
Outgoing Vice-Chair
CPRE Derbyshire**

I would like to thank Gareth Roberts, Ben Rodgers and Rob Gray for all their help and support to CPRE Derbyshire.

We also welcome new volunteers Andrea Watwood, Martin Houldsworth, David Matthews and Sarah Nadelman to our committee.

As mentioned in last year's AGM report, we were awarded a grant to run a Community Energy Visioning project for Bonsall village in the Derbyshire Dales

We did this with the support of one of our leading experts in this field, Andy Tickle from CPRE PDSY. The project was a great learning event and was attended by over thirty people from the village. A report was issued in February 2023 accompanied by some artist representations of how renewable energy sources would look within the landscape of the village and surrounding area. The village of Bonsall, under local resident Wendy Bullar, has now set up a Renewable Energy Action group to see how they can turn this vision into a future reality for the village.

We have also decided that we need to communicate with our members and our community partners more often, so we have decided to introduce a quarterly newsletter. Hopefully you enjoyed the first edition issued in March, and this annual report. Please feel free to provide us with any feedback. The intent is to send this digitally via e-mail to avoid expensive postal costs.

Finally, we are continuing to look to promote CPRE Derbyshire in the area and will have a stall at the Bakewell Show on Sunday 16th July 2023. If you are attending, please come along and say hello.

Thank you for your continuing support and all the very best for 2023-24.



**John Ydlibi, Chair
CPRE Derbyshire**



Local residents walk across part of the site of a proposed solar installation in Alfreton (more on page 6)

Hedgerows Heroes

The Hedgerow Heroes project, which also supports CPRE's national hedgerow campaign, helped to restore hedgerow in three sites in Derbyshire.

Having secured joint funding with Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, we embarked on a mission to create and restore hedgerows in Derbyshire. With our aim to directly engage with communities and volunteers, we partnered with TCV (The Conservation Volunteers), Groundwork and Derbyshire County Council and worked with local volunteers and CPRE members.

Volunteers and our partners worked together on three Derbyshire sites: Hooks Farm Dairy, Borrowwash, Whistlewood Common, Melbourne and Williamthorpe Nature Reserve, part of the Five Pits Trail near Clay Cross.

At Williamthorpe and Whistlewood Common, volunteers were trained in the traditional art of hedge-laying. By partly cutting through the trunks of the trees and shrubs of an established hedge and arching and weaving the branches together (pleaching), hedge-laying encourages new growth and strengthens and rejuvenates the structure of the hedge, keeping it healthy and blooming.

"It is great to do something of benefit to wildlife. I've learnt new skills and enjoyed meeting new people with similar interests."
Volunteer,
Williamthorpe Nature Reserve

Over the winter of 2022-23, we joined three other East Midlands counties in our Hedgerow Heroes project, part of CPRE's aim to increase the hedgerow network by 40% by 2050. This target was recently accepted by the government, after CPRE's campaign, in answer to the Climate Change Committee's call to help achieve carbon net zero.

Overall, between November 2022 and March 2023, we pleached 500 metres of hedge, involved 64 volunteers over 16 sessions and planted 1000 saplings to thicken established hedges and generate new ones. We used native hedgerow plants such as blackthorn, field maple, hawthorn, holly, hazel and dog rose to create wildlife corridors, habitat and food sources for insects, birds and mammals whilst also supporting natural carbon capture and drainage plus shelter for livestock.

CPRE Derbyshire is proud to have successfully contributed to preserving and increasing hedgerow in our locality.

"CPRE Hedgerow Heroes campaign provided the impetus for us to take on one of those projects on our site that would have been near-impossible to undertake without outside assistance and expertise."
Graham Truscott, Director
Whistlewood Common



Hedgeliflife Help Out

Our annual accounts

An update on the hedges at Williamthorpe post pleaching and planting

Hedgeliflife Help Out is a new volunteering activity launched by CPRE as part of the Coronation Big Help Out.



Hedgeliflife Helpout was designed by CPRE in collaboration with The Tree Council, of which CPRE is a member. It aims to help assess the health of our hedges.

A group of volunteers and Groundwork staff took the opportunity in May to revisit the Williamthorpe Nature Reserve, where our recent hedge-laying and planting took place, and to undertake the Hedgeliflife Help Out survey.

The group inspected the newly planted hedging, which was springing into life and vigorous, and the stretch that the volunteers layed was healthy and full of leaf and blossom.

Participants then completed online Hedgeliflife Help Out surveys, based on straight forward observations, on various stretches of hedge on the reserve and submitted the results to help build up a picture of the nation's hedgerows.

**C.P.R.E.
DERBYSHIRE BRANCH**
Receipts and payments account for the year ended 31st December 2022

2021		2022	
£	£	£	£
	48922	Balance at 1st January 2022	43735
Receipts			
4916		Subscriptions and Donations	4662
4		Interest on Deposit A/C	350
0		Hedgerow Heroes Project	6217
	<u>4920</u>		<u>11229</u>
	53842		54964
Payments			
148		Printing and Stationery	243
124		Postage	229
62		Travelling and Subsistence	215
385		Insurance	395
0		AGM Expenses	419
0		Hedgerow Heroes Expenses	888
132		Internet Services	43
350		Planning Expenses	0
8906		Branch Development	13050
	<u>10107</u>		<u>15482</u>
	43735	Balance of funds at 31st December 2022	39482
This is held as follows:-			
35875		CCLA Deposit A/C	36225
6739		Lloyds Bank Treasurers A/C	6555
42614			<u>42880</u>
1121		Plus cash in transit	1045
0		Less unrepresented cheques	4443
43735			<u>39482</u>
The Branch owns office and other equipment with an original cost of £1,993			
			Adrian Watts Treasurer 
I certify that I have examined the books and records of the Branch and that these accounts are in accordance therewith. I report that no matters have arisen during the course of my examination on which I have to give an adverse report.			
Date <u>March 23rd 2023</u>			Jeff Hanson Independent Examiner 



Volunteers completing their Hedgeliflife Help Out surveys

Planning update for the last 12 months

Solar farms in the countryside

More and more planning applications for development in open countryside are for solar farms, some very large scale.

CPRE Derbyshire promotes renewable energy installations on brownfield land and rooftops, rather than green field sites. National CPRE's recent report on Rooftop Renewables supports this view.

In the last year we have objected to a number of solar farm proposals, which would have an unacceptably damaging impact on local landscapes and amenity:

Victory at Alfreton Solar Farm Appeal

We joined the Save Alfreton Countryside action group to prevent a 185 acre solar farm blighting the landscape north of Alfreton.

The developers appealed against the borough council's refusal which meant that the final decision was made by the government's Planning Inspectorate.

CPRE Derbyshire gave evidence at the appeal hearing in October 2022. Ultimately the Inspector accepted our case that the development would have an unacceptable impact on the landscape character of the area and irrevocably harm the last remaining countryside directly accessible on foot from Alfreton.

Lullington Solar Farm – Appeal result awaited

A potential solar farm capable of powering 15,000 homes set in the Derbyshire countryside on agricultural land between Coton in the Elms and Lullington in South Derbyshire was refused in 2022 by South Derbyshire District Council, following hundreds of objections, including our own. The developers have appealed the decision and we await the decision by the Planning Inspectorate.

100-acre solar farm near Creswell and Elmton

A proposed utility-scale solar farm on the outskirts of two Derbyshire villages would see more than 100 acres of good quality agricultural land converted. The site, which is roughly the size of 60 football pitches, is positioned on Frithwood Lane, between the north Derbyshire villages of Creswell and Elmton. If approved this would be the fourth solar farm in the area - with the 25,000-panel Creswell Solar farm just northeast of the proposed site. We have objected and await the outcome.

Battery Energy Storage System at Calow

Another aspect of increased renewable energy generation is the installation of energy storage systems to cope with intermittent supply. We are keeping a close eye on such developments for their impact on the landscape and on rural tranquillity – they emit a constant audible hum and also cause light pollution. One such example is a proposal at Back Lane, Calow – we have submitted an objection.

CPRE Derbyshire is realistic about the expansion of renewable energy generation as a critical part of delivering our net carbon neutral targets.

We are supportive in principle of well-planned developments of this nature that also account thoroughly for local needs.

In practice, however, we apply the same principles to evaluate the location, design and impact of such sites as to any other development taking place in the countryside and considering national and local planning policy.



Planning update continued

Other Planning Objections in 2022/23

We continued to review all kinds of development proposals in the countryside over the last year. Here are some highlights:

Knockerdown, Carsington Water

We were particularly pleased that Derbyshire Dales District Council (DDDC) agreed with us and local residents that a car-based leisure facility at Carsington, submitted by Caffeine and Machine, was totally inappropriate in this rural location.

Land South of Main Road, Brailsford

A proposal for 100 houses on open countryside adjacent to the Brailsford Conservation area was thankfully refused by DDDC. We objected to the development of this green field site with far reaching views across the landscape. The number of houses in the village has almost doubled in the last few years – this development would have been a step too far.

Chaddesden Wood, Oakwood, Derby

150 houses proposed in open countryside and woodland just north of Derby, an area much loved and enjoyed by local people. We submitted a strong objection – to date over 700 have been registered and we await a decision by the city council.

Holiday Lodges, Longwalls Lane, Blackbrook
Although relatively small-scale, this proposal for holiday lodges, with new infrastructure such as car parking and lighting, would be a damaging intrusion in the local landscape and would undermine the character and tranquillity of the World Heritage Site buffer zone. The location and the road access are unsuitable for a busy development of this kind.

Affordable Housing

We continue to speak up for the need for affordable housing in rural Derbyshire. For example, Halldale Quarry near Matlock, a brownfield proposal for more than 200 homes, which generally we support, has zero affordables in the mix. We have raised this with the council planners.

Derby and Derbyshire Minerals Plan

We have submitted a final response to the last version of the Minerals Plan to go out for public consultation. In spite of some improvements to the earlier version, we are still very concerned about proposed new sand and gravel sites at Foston and Sudbury in the lower Dove Valley, which will harm the landscape and bring industrial traffic to an essentially rural area.

Local Plans

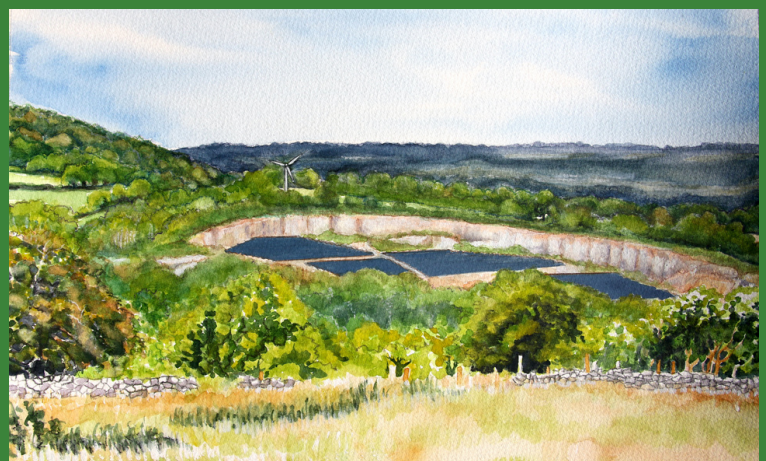
We await the outcome of the Erewash, Derbyshire Dales and Amber Valley Local Plan reviews. We submitted detailed comments, urging the continued protection of green belt land and using brownfield land for housing, renewable energy and employment.

Bonsall Community Energy Visioning

In last year's annual report, we told you how we teamed up with CPRE Peak District and South Yorkshire to run a series of workshops with Bonsall residents, who were keen to promote local action to mitigate climate change.

The full report on the outcome of the project, illustrated with local scenes by local artist Christine Gregory, is now available on our website.

The community group is keen to take things forward and has already held follow-up meetings to map a strategy for the future. More information is available on their website https://bonsallenergy_group/



AGM at Carsington Water Visitor Centre Saturday 22nd July 2023

Henmore Room, Carsington Water Visitor Centre,
Big Lane, Upper Town, Ashbourne, DE6 1ST

Agenda

10.00 - 10.30 Arrival/ Teas & Coffee

10.30 - 11.15 Talk

11.15 - 12.00 Walk

12.00 - 13.00 Buffet Lunch / Networking

13.00 - 13.45 AGM

1. Apologies
2. Minutes from last year's AGM and Matters Arising
3. Executive report and summary of 2022-23 Annual Report
4. Statement of Accounts (included in the Annual Report)
5. Election of Officers - Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer
6. Election of Independent Examiner
7. AOB

13.45 - 14.00 Departures

Please RSVP by email to committee@cprederbyshire.org.uk

Your CPRE needs YOU!

Do you have a couple of hours a week you could spare to help the countryside?

Volunteers are the lifeblood of CPRE Derbyshire - all of our roles are voluntary.

We're looking for four new volunteers:

- > Planning Assistant, South Derbyshire
- > Volunteer Coordinator
- > Community Engagement Volunteer
- > Social Media and Website Volunteer

Training and ongoing support will be provided. You don't need professional expertise to do these voluntary roles; just enthusiasm and common sense.

Speak to us at the AGM or apply via our website:

<https://volunteer.cpre.org.uk/opportunities/>
or drop us an email.

We'd love to have you on board.



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