



The countryside charity
Hertfordshire

Annual Review 2023/24



President's welcome



About two thirds of the land area in Hertfordshire is in the Green Belt and I contemplate often how fortunate we are to have such beautiful green spaces and open countryside available for everyone to enjoy.

Despite more awareness of the importance of green spaces to our health and wellbeing, the threat of inappropriate, large-scale development does not go away. We know the government has ambitious ideas for new housing, more commercial development and an increase in renewable energy generation. However, we still do not have a Land use Strategy in England to guide these demands.

We continue to call for commitment to make the countryside a top priority, for protection of the Green Belt, the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB) and all other designated protected areas and wildlife habitats. We ask that the new Government applies the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provisions that provide for the

ongoing protection of these areas and the wider countryside and for the use of the most recently available data in making projections of housing need (2018 projections rather than 2014). We shall meet with our elected representatives and local officials to advocate for the redevelopment of brownfield sites and to avoid Green Belt development.

Right now, the work of CPRE Hertfordshire combined with your support is more important than ever if we are to continue our vital work to protect Hertfordshire's countryside from over-development.

I am proud to be President of CPRE Hertfordshire and cannot highlight enough how thankful I am for the wonderful work our volunteers and staff do. I hope that you – our members - will continue to support CPRE Hertfordshire to protect our green spaces.

Sir Simon Bowes Lyon KCVO
President

Annual general meeting

Saturday 5 October 2024 - 1.30pm

We are delighted to be holding our AGM at the Woodhall Estate near Watton at Stone. Thomas Abel Smith will welcome us to Woodhall and, after the AGM, there will be a break for refreshments and an opportunity to join a guided walk to see the River Beane restoration work and to view the winning Children's Art Competition display.

After the break, local author Elenor Mannion will give a talk about her latest children's countryside themed book and the art competition prize giving will take place.

We would love it if you could join us and if your spouse, partner or a friend came too. Please let us know by returning the enclosed form or by email.

See insert for more details.

A view from the chair



We continue to see a high level of activity in the planning sphere and have worked with local authorities and environmental groups to try to steer development away from the most treasured parts of Hertfordshire's countryside.

Four of the ten local authorities in Hertfordshire have not yet completed their Local Plans and it is unlikely that these will be signed off before the new government clarifies its intentions on housebuilding.

I was interested to read that Burnley, the area with the lowest house prices in England (£123,000) is suffering from a shortage of affordable housing, so perhaps the government should start its housebuilding programme there, contributing to "levelling up" and not exacerbating the overcrowding in the South East?

The national scandal of pouring untreated sewage into our waterways and the sea has been exacerbated by the heavy rainfall in the first half of this year. Meanwhile some of the water companies continue to pay dividends in excess of their profits and ramp up huge debts. I hope the new government will give OFWAT and the Environment Agency more effective powers to stop this disgrace. I recently attended a lecture on the work of Joseph Bazalgette who built a vast network of sewers under London after the "Great Stink" in 1857, with only manual labour and completed the work by 1865. The Thames Tideway Tunnel has just taken the same eight years to build with modern machinery and this should result in a great improvement, but far more is needed.

We launched our Children's Art competition at Easter and, with entries now closed, the number we have received means the judge's task will not be an easy one. We will award the prizes at an extended AGM on 5 October to be held on the Woodhall Estate, courtesy of the Abel Smith family, and hope to include a tour of the extensive improvements to the River Beane carried out on the estate.

We are also working on a digital mapping project which will show exactly where planning applications are located to help our members and accessible to the public.

Our finances remain stable for the moment although our policy remains continuing to run a deficit each year to fund our high quality and effective staff. We can afford to do this for a few years, but during that time we must develop our fundraising efforts.

We have had resignations from four Trustees this year, Claire Russell, Claire Trbovic, Terry Over and Matt White and I thank them for their very worthwhile contributions to our charity. We welcome new Trustees Adam Hopwood and Krupa Vukmirovic who have been co-opted, and as with all Trustees will be subject to election at the AGM.

I thank all who are involved in our work, our wide network of followers on social media, our members, donors, volunteers, staff and trustees and wish them well in the challenging times ahead.

Allan McNab
Chairman



Sewerage spill into the River Rib at Standon Sewage Treatment Works
Photo: Tim Hagyard

A message from our chief executive



It's an exciting time to be leading CPRE Hertfordshire as we have a new government and climate change, nature and net zero are top priorities. I hope that protecting our countryside will remain an equally important part of the dialogue and of national policy.

The past year has been a busy time for all our staff and volunteers. As always, our focus was very much on local issues and we continued to work closely with local action groups to support them in raising awareness of inappropriate planning applications. Most recently, our campaign highlighted Hertsmere's latest draft Local Plan, which proposed releasing up to 600 hectares from the Green Belt.

A few months ago we ran our first virtual training webinars on Local Plans and Understanding the Planning Application process to enable people to gain knowledge on how to access, navigate and understand the plans and how to comment on them. They were a great success attracting over 60 attendees and we have plans to repeat them this Autumn.

We have also significantly grown awareness of what we do through our social media channels. We now have over 2,700 individuals in Hertfordshire following our work and updates on Facebook and Instagram, and our recent launch of a new LinkedIn page will continue to amplify our voice and help people speak up about unwanted developments on our countryside. We have also increased the frequency of our supporters' e-newsletters to bi-monthly so that we can provide more frequent updates on the news that matters most.

This year and as part of our mission to connect children with the countryside, we have also relaunched our Children's Art Competition to all primary school children in Hertfordshire, themed around what the countryside means to them. We have already received many entries and we look forward to rewarding the winning school and children with their prizes at this year's AGM at the Woodhall Estate near Watton-at-Stone.

Another key objective this year has been our focus on raising awareness of what we do through public-facing events, and we have so far in 2024 attended six public events and two volunteer fairs through which we have grown our members and supporters and shone a light on the work we do to protect our beautiful countryside for a wider audience. We are looking forward to putting into place a number of fundraising events this year and we hope that our members will support us in our activities to strengthen our income.

Finally, none of this work would be possible without the support of my amazing team and our volunteers. We are enormously fortunate to have over 30 active volunteers giving up their time to help protect and promote our countryside and they make a huge difference to the work we do.

Abby Coften
Chief Executive



Woodhall Estate
Photo: Woodhall Estate

A year in review

The year in planning - 2023/24



I think it is fair to say that this has been a fairly tumultuous year for planning which shows no sign of letting up! The General Election result will change a lot for us in the planning world, so I will concentrate here on what has been and the record for last year includes, as ever, both successes and failures.

National issues

Taking the year as a whole, there was a fair bit of planning related legislation and a constant turnover of Planning Ministers in Government which was unhelpful. The main legislative changes were the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) which obtained Royal Assent in November, and the publication of amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2023.

It remains to be seen how much of these changes will survive. The LURA would have significant implications for planning if it is enacted, and includes a mixed bag of measures ranging from, for example, further centralisation with regard to development management, and apparent devolution of certain powers to communities, such as neighbourhood plans. Together with the limited changes in the NPPF these could be influential but we await further changes which are promised soon.

Local Plans

An important element of our work concerns detailed responses to Local Plans in the County and this year has seen several major Regulation 18 consultations following last year's submissions and massive responses to Hertsmere and Dacorum. In September we responded to the St Albans Draft Local Plan which was a hugely disappointing document in terms of its proposed impact on the Green Belt (and incidentally the modest public response). The apparently never-ending saga of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan inquiry finally ran out of steam with the Plan's adoption by the Council in October.

We also made a representation to the Three Rivers Draft Local Plan which was less damaging in terms of the limited amount of Green Belt proposed to be allocated for development. More recently, Dacorum and Hertsmere Councils undertook partial re-consultations under Regulation 18 which reduced the amount of Green Belt proposed to be allocated, insufficiently in our view in both cases, and virtually ignoring all the other issues we raised in our earlier submissions.

There is considerable hesitancy with regard to the future of many Local Plans due to uncertainty with regard to future housing need calculations and the status of protected land, such as Green Belt. These are crucial issues for us in Hertfordshire and we keep abreast of the latest developments through our connections with national CPRE office, peer planning groups and organisations such as the London Green Belt Council and the Community Planning Alliance.

We made submissions on all the Hertfordshire Local Plan consultations this year, and many local groups and individuals used material we provided and let us know that they appreciated the support. There is little doubt that our interventions affected the councils concerned, but there is still reluctance to challenge out-of-date housing need estimates and invoke the helpful policy constraints which exist in the NPPF.

Applications and proposals

With regard to our constant review and representations of planning applications, last year saw a number of decisions on proposals which have been pending for a considerable time. We received good news on the dismissal of the planning inquiry where we appeared into residential proposals in Brookman's Park last July, and more recently on the major appeal inquiry on land east of Tring (Marshcroft) although the decision by the Secretary of State not to grant permission is subject to legal challenge by Redrow.

CPRE Hertfordshire helped defend the Chilterns National Landscape and the Green Belt on land east of Tring ('Marshcroft'), where 1,400 dwellings were proposed on 300 acres of open countryside. We won at planning appeal, but the developer is still pursuing a legal challenge. Photo: Grove Fields Residents Association



Planning cont.

The long-outstanding decision on the Aldenham solar array was issued in April by the Secretary of State, dismissing the appeal following the inquiry where we appeared as part of the Joint Objectors' Group, and earlier in the year a damaging solar application was dismissed at Little Heath Lane, Berkhamsted. Both decisions stressed the significance of the protected Green Belt.

Less welcome are recent decisions on residential development at Chiswell Green, Sarratt and Kings Langley, and the Secretary of State's over-turning of a recommendation by the Planning Inspector not to grant permission for a solar array at Great Wymondley. Inconsistencies in Planning Inspectorate and Ministerial decisions are a real worry and show no sign of reducing, and should be a matter of concern for the new Government as they bring the planning system into disrepute.

We continue to make representations on planning applications from all ten Borough and District Councils in the County and the County Council where appropriate. This year we responded to 60 applications which ranged from inappropriate individual residential and commercial units to major proposals for housing estates, commercial and industrial complexes.

In terms of the larger proposals affecting the County, we prepared a Relevant Representation statement jointly with CPRE Bedfordshire for the Development Consent Order proceedings for the Luton Airport expansion, and our President attended one of the hearings and contributed. We continue to review progress on the Gilston Garden Villages where East Herts Council decisions to grant permission for over 10,000 houses are facing legal challenge.

East Herts Council changed political control in May 2023, as did many others in Herts who are wrestling with the previous administrations' decisions. This is a common occurrence in the County and senior planning officers are often reluctant to revisit decisions even when circumstances have changed and this affects how Councillors react to development proposals.

We continue to monitor progress on the former Radlett Aerodrome proposals for major commercial development on Green Belt, Hemel Garden Communities, and housing proposals at Bowman's Cross and east of Luton, liaising with local groups and stakeholders to challenge these inappropriate and damaging proposals on open countryside. Similarly we assisted local residents in West Welwyn, the River Beane valley and elsewhere to oppose huge solar installations on protected land which is generally in agricultural use.

In some cases, development proposals are well advanced, and included in Local Plan allocations, or the subjects of planning applications, but we continue to seek ways to challenge these constant threats to our countryside. In a number of cases we continue to work with active and well-informed local groups engaged for several years in opposing proposals which are unnecessary as well as damaging.

Liaison and training

Increasingly, we seek to make connections with local political leaders and councillors, with a view to informing them of the value and significance of the countryside and how they can protect it. Newly elected Members are often not well enough informed about the planning system and we offer to meet them and provide information to aid their decisions.

This year we inaugurated planning training webinars in March and April, on Local Plans and Development Management, for all interested parties, including councillors, and we are planning more in the autumn. Lively discussions followed the presentations by Alison Young and I in April, and good contacts were made with local groups and individuals.

As ever, we could not do anywhere near as much as we do without our dedicated planning volunteers, coordinated by Linda Brookes, who scour the lists of planning applications published each week and identify the applications we need to respond to. They provide the foundations for our planning work and are crucial to our continuing effectiveness.



CPRE Hertfordshire helped defend the Green Belt at Bradmore Way at Brookmans Park; this was a big success at planning appeal and at the subsequent failed legal challenge. Photo: Terry Over



CPRE Hertfordshire campaigns for 'rooftop renewables' - solar panels on all suitable rooftops, car park canopies, railway verges and similar, not on productive agricultural land. We helped defend 80 acres in the Green Belt at Little Heath Lane, Berkhamsted from a large-scale commercial solar farm proposal. Photo: Elizabeth Hamilton

Chris Berry
Planning Manager

Volunteering

Without our small army of wonderful volunteers, CPRE Hertfordshire simply would not be able to function. As a small charity we depend on our volunteers to help deliver nearly everything we do – from our planning and campaigning activities, to our marketing and communications, to our financial controls and governance. Of course we are very fortunate to have our four part-time paid staff, and it's these individuals who lead our day-to-day activities and manage our volunteers.

Here's what three of our volunteers have said about their experience:

‘I love volunteering for CPRE Hertfordshire because I can use my skills. It has increased my interest in the countryside. I have learned a lot and I feel I am contributing in a small way to its protection.’

‘To anyone thinking about volunteering with CPRE Hertfordshire, I'd say go for it! It won't take up a huge amount of time, but you will significantly impact the local community and wildlife. I'm proud to say that I help green spaces.’

‘Getting to understand the work that CPRE Hertfordshire does has been so inspiring, I had no idea there was so much hard work being done to protect our countryside.’

Additional volunteering highlights over the past 12 months include:

- We averaged 34 volunteers during the year including Trustees
- We were delighted to welcome six new volunteers who joined us over the previous 12 months
- Four of our volunteers have now been with us between 5 and 9 years, and another six of our volunteers have each been with us for over ten years
- We presented special recognition awards to three of our volunteers:

to Elizabeth Hamilton for her influence and impact as an Interested Party and de facto Expert Witness on biodiversity issues at planning appeal Inquiries

to John Newbury for his exceptional stewardship of CPRE Hertfordshire's financial resources as a Finance Volunteer and previously as our Treasurer

and to Diane Pettit for having volunteered with us for over 20 years, not only in her ongoing administrative role but also as a brilliant ambassador for the charity, encouraging membership and promoting the sale of our merchandise



Our Annual Thank You party Photos: Gill Bryant

- Although most of our volunteer recruitment advertising is now done online through charity recruitment platforms and social media, we recently participated in two in-person volunteer fairs to help publicise CPRE Hertfordshire to different audiences. One of these was Viatrix's corporate volunteer fair held at their UK headquarters in Hatfield, and the other was GoVolHerts' community volunteer fair held in Hitchin. At both events there was considerable interest in CPRE Hertfordshire's activities with lots of sign-ups for our Supporters' Newsletter and several individuals wanting to find out more about volunteering with us.
- In June we held our annual Thank You party for all of our volunteers and staff and their partners, and despite the wet weather everyone enjoyed the event including the well-stocked bar and delicious canapés!

As always, we welcome new volunteers to our team. All of our volunteer roles are highly flexible to fit around your other commitments, and for many roles no particular experience is necessary. Find out more on our volunteering web-page at <https://www.cpreherts.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/>

Eliza Hermann
Volunteer Coordinator

Treasurer's Report

Year ended 31 December 2023



In 2023, the charity had net expenditure of £43,299. The unrealised gain in the value of investments was £26,836, giving a net reduction in funds for the year of £16,463.

Income

The total income for 2023 was £91,869. The Charity had strong income generation in 2023. Roughly half of this income was raised during the year to cover legal costs associated with two planning application appeals – Marshcroft and Bradmore Way.

Expenditure

Total expenditure for 2023 was £135,168. This was higher than 2022 but in line with budget. Legal and Consulting Fees included £43,531, which relates to the Marshcroft and Bradmore Way planning appeals.

Funds

As at 31 December 2023, total funds amounted to £537,518. All are unrestricted.

Tangible Fixed Assets

The refurbishment work of the Charity's office in Welwyn Village was completed in 2023. We spent just over £36,000 on this work, which included a new roof. The value of the office is shown on the balance sheet at book cost.

Reserves

The Trustees approved a reserves policy in 2021. This considered and documented how the Charity would utilise unrestricted funds, including for a period of several years where the Charity reports net expenditure in the year.

Outlook

The Charity will continue with its activities in line with the Three Year Strategic Plan and Annual Operating Plan. Costs will be vigilantly monitored against the annual budget agreed by the Trustees.

Steve Wiltshire
Treasurer

Financial summary

Menzies LLP (formerly Wagstaffs) have agreed the financial summary on page 9 as being consistent with the full financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023. These were prepared in accordance with the applicable Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the full annual accounts and the independent examiner's report on those accounts should be consulted. Copies can be obtained from CPRE Hertfordshire. The accounts were approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf on 23 May 2024, and will be submitted to The Charity Commission.

JA McNab, Hon. Chairman

E Hamilton, Trustee

Independent Examiner: J E Fox, Menzies LLP, Richmond House, Walkern Road, Stevenage, SG1 3QP.

Financial Summary

Income	Year Ended 31.12.23	Year Ended 31.12.22	Expenditure	Year Ended 31.12.23	Year Ended 31.12.22
<u>Donations and legacies</u>			<u>Charitable Activities</u>		
Donations	52,872	18,930	Personnel costs	74,005	71,041
Legacies	0	0	Office expenses	4,879	5,493
Subscriptions	24,408	24,292	<u>Raising Funds</u>		
<u>Fundraising events</u>	2,403	3,228	Publicity	6,845	8,850
<u>Investment Income</u>			<u>Support costs</u>		
Deposit a/c interest	3,564	1,515	Premises	3,123	3,479
Investment Fund Income	8,622	7,356	Accounting & legal fees	45,873	9,521
			Depreciation	443	0
Total Income	91,869	55,321	Total Expenditure	135,168	98,384
Surplus (Deficit)	(43,299)	(43,063)			
Balance Sheet	31.12.23	31.12.22		31.12.23	31.12.22
<u>Fixed Assets</u>			Represented by:		
Freehold Property	148,469	128,203	General Fund	288,346	334,858
Tangible Fixed Assets	3,351	2,943	Jones Legacy	208,517	183,355
Investments	314,078	287,242	Davis Memorial	40,655	35,768
Net Current Assets	71,620	135,593	Jubilee Appeal Fund	0	0
Total Net Assets	537,518	553,981	Total Funds	537,518	553,981

Officers and Staff as at July 2024

President: Sir Simon Bowes Lyon, KCVO

Hon. Life Vice Presidents: Dorothy Abel Smith, MBE, Nicholas Halsey TD, DL, Dr Mervyn Miller, Anthony Eastwood, Stephen Pollock-Hill, David Irving, Elizabeth Hamilton, Kevin FitzGerald TD, DL, Peter Waine

Hon. Vice President: Ralph Abel Smith

Officers: Hon. Chairman: Allan McNab, Hon. Vice Chair: Alison Young, Hon. Treasurer: Steve Wiltshire

Board of Trustees: Allan McNab, Alison Young, Elizabeth Hamilton, Steve Wiltshire, Adam Hopwood, Krana Vukmirovic

Staff: Chief Executive: Abby Coften, Planning Manager: Chris Berry, Planning Assistant: Linda Brookes, Office Manager: Gill Bryant

CPRE Hertfordshire is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Registered charity number: 1162419.

Bankers: Barclays Bank plc, Welwyn Garden City

Our year in numbers

Over 15,000 planning applications across Hertfordshire were screened

We submitted comments against 60 of the most damaging and inappropriate proposals, with a total site gross area of 665 hectares of Green Belt (1,642 football fields!)

We have participated as an interested party in 5 planning appeal inquiries: Little Heath Lane solar, Church Lane Sarratt, Great Wymondley solar, Ragged Lane Chiswell Green, and Land East of A10 Buntingford.

Over the past 18 months, 35% of planning applications we have objected to in order to protect Hertfordshire's countryside have failed to get planning permission, with 57% still to be determined. Only 8% have been granted.

We have received over 46,500 visits on our website where visitors have kept up to date on local news, got involved with our competitions and found out more about our volunteering

We couldn't achieve all this without our volunteers. We have 34 and they are each much appreciated

We now have more than 2,700 followers on our CPRE Hertfordshire Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn channels, enabling us to reach local communities and increase awareness of what we do

3 volunteers were presented with a National CPRE recognition award

Looking forward to the year ahead

Looking ahead in planning

I think it's fair to say that our 'look ahead' for planning this year will have rather more than its fair share of conjecture! We now know, as a result of the General Election, that planning will figure highly in the new Government's priorities and there have already been important announcements.

Housing targets will be re-imposed for Local Plans, Green Belts will be reviewed, and large-scale new settlements promoted. Some of this could be alarming if not done well and in full consultation with local communities. The key dangers I foresee are that both the complexity of the situation regarding housing provision, and the value of the countryside will be insufficiently addressed in future policy changes.

This is not the place for detailed consideration of all the factors involved, but there is no basis for us to lower our guard in defence of the countryside, and especially our Green Belt. We should not forget that local planning authorities have the responsibility not only to protect the Green Belts, but also "to plan positively to enhance their beneficial uses..." (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 150).

CPRE has long campaigned for strategic planning with regard to issues such as housing provision, major infrastructure and protection of the countryside which are of course directly related in many cases. We will be contacting our new (and surviving) MPs to keep them fully informed of our concerns as they consider expected new legislation, and in the meantime, our representations and responses to planning applications and Local Plans will continue.

On Local Plans, four Herts authorities are moving towards Regulation 19 Local Plan submissions. Dacorum, Three Rivers, Hertsmere and St Albans Councils are all in the final stages of preparing Draft Local Plans for Examination in Public by local planning inquiry.

We are likely to challenge the Draft Local Plans at the planning inquiries when they occur in 2025, but we also have the opportunity to review whether the Draft Local Plan to be submitted for Examination is 'sound' and has been prepared correctly. There is a six-week consultation before the Draft Local Plan is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, and generally the local authority regards this as a 'rubber-stamping' operation, as it not possible to challenge the content of the Local Plan at this stage.

However, our view is that three of the Draft Local Plans (for Dacorum, Hertsmere and St Albans) are presently failing to demonstrate that they have been prepared properly. We intend to make representations in respect of the inadequacy of the Local Plans which will go to the Planning Inspectorate.

Principal concerns are the huge housing proposals for the Hemel Garden Communities affecting both St Albans and Dacorum Council areas, and Bowmans Cross in Hertsmere, which are included in the respective Draft Local Plans.



We will continue our fight at 'Hemel Garden Communities', an enormous proposed development of 11,000 dwellings and vast commercial spaces on circa 1800 acres of land in the Green Belt spanning both Dacorum Borough and St Albans District - the largest proposed development anywhere in Hertfordshire.

Photo: Abby Coften

We also intend to challenge the appropriateness of major commercial developments such as film studios and vast warehouses in the Green Belt and the wholly inadequate treatment of crucial environmental issues such as climate change amelioration, the protection and promotion of biodiversity, impacts on water supply and waste disposal and related matters within Local Plans.

East and North Herts Councils are also required to review their Local Plans next year, and this gives these new councils (much changed since May 2023) the opportunity to take account of changed circumstances including reduced rates of household formation and new environmental legislation requirements. We will continue to contact councillors and local political leaders and offer informal training more widely through webinars on the Local Plan preparation and Development Management processes. And of course the planning applications keep coming whatever the state of the planning system, and we will respond where the countryside is threatened.

A particular emphasis this year may well be on water and waste disposal issues which are attracting wide public attention and impact greatly on the health of the wider countryside. These are also related to climate change amelioration and adaptation and the future of biodiversity and these must now be taken much more seriously than they have been up until now.

We will be supporting the national CPRE campaigns on promoting rooftop solar generation and affordable rural housing. Rooftop generation offers huge opportunities to divert the need for ground mounted solar arrays and the associated infrastructure.

Truly affordable housing provision is a constant issue for Hertfordshire households and it is certainly not being provided by the volume house-builders on Green Belt sites, despite their protestations. Again we support national CPRE

Planning cont...

efforts to seek realistic solutions in rural areas where local households are unable to either buy or rent suitable accommodation for their families.

Whatever changes are proposed for the planning system it is widely agreed that it needs to be better resourced, and take fuller account of the inherent value of the countryside to the benefit of all our communities, whether rural or urban. Hertfordshire demonstrates so many of the factors affecting our unique and highly valued countryside and the threats are unrelenting. The planning team is committed to maintaining pressure on local and national bodies affecting our countryside and we are always seeking further support and assistance.

Chris Berry
Planning Manager



As we go to press, we understand the Secretary of State has 'recovered' the planning appeal for a massive proposed data centre on this productive agricultural land in the Green Belt at Abbots Langley in Three Rivers District. Photo: Eliza Hermann

The Children's Art Competition is back

Launched early in 2024 we have received lots of amazing artwork from the primary school children of Hertfordshire.

The Art Competition is run to help children and their families connect with the countryside and perhaps think about it in a different way. The benefits of young children engaging with the countryside have never been more important:

- their mental, physical and emotional health and wellbeing are improved by being in nature and looking at nature
- the countryside and nature bring topics to life across many aspects of the primary school curriculum
- appreciation of and connection with nature is key within the teaching of climate change awareness
- art is an inspiring media for engaging with many children and has emotional, physical, cognitive and learning benefits

Be the first to see the winning artwork

Join us at the AGM in October, where we are excited to be sharing the winning artwork and presenting the prizes. We set a different, environmental or nature related theme each year, this year it's "Why I love the countryside".

Looking forward to 2025

The competition is such a lovely way to help us achieve our goal of connecting young people with the countryside. We're aiming to continue running the competition and would like some help setting future themes.

If you have some ideas you would like to share we would be pleased to hear from you. Please contact us by e-mail: office@cpreherts.org.uk

Gill Bryant
Office Manager

Some previous competition winners



Fundraising - the year ahead



Near Reed Photo: Elizabeth Hamilton

There are lots of easy and fun ways you can get involved to help us fundraise for our charity and protect our beautiful countryside in Hertfordshire.

Vote for us in Tesco Welwyn and Hatfield Stores

CPRE Hertfordshire's Children's Art Competition has been selected by Tesco Stronger Starts for a customer vote in Tesco stores. Voting with Tesco's blue tokens will commence in store from the first week in July 2024 until the end of September 2024.

CPRE Hertfordshire's Children's Art Competition helps young children and their families to connect with and learn more about the local countryside through art. By voting for this project, you will help support the winning school with £500 to create a nature area or supply tools and plants so that children can learn more about nature and the environment in a hands-on way.

You can vote for our project in any of the following Tesco stores:

Tesco Hatfield Extra	AL9 5JY
Hatfield Rise Express	AL10 8FH
Shire Park Express	AL7 1TW
Welwyn Express	AL6 9EQ
Welwyn Garden City Exp Small unit	AL7 2BQ

So next time you shop in store, please pick up a blue token and place your vote for CPRE Hertfordshire.

Launch of our new fundraising guide

In September, we will launch our new fundraising guide on the website to help inspire members and supporters on the many ways you can fundraise for us. This could be through running a quiz, an afternoon tea party, bring and buy sale or undertaking a walk, run or climb!

Our local talks

Our local talks are always popular. This year we will be expanding our variety of interesting talks either in person or Zoom. And of course, we are always happy to talk on bespoke topics related to the countryside.

For more information visit our website:

<https://www.cpreherts.org.uk/get-involved/events/talks/> or to make a booking, please contact us by emailing: office@cpreherts.org.uk

Participate in our guided local walk

This Autumn we will be celebrating Countryside Day in Hertfordshire with a guided local walk. We will be emailing members the details on how to book a ticket for this in August so please look out for this in your inboxes.

Understanding planning training

We will also be continuing our popular online planning training available to book on our website, suitable for anyone concerned about planning issues in their community.

The training in two parts covers: Understanding the Local Plan process and how to have your say (first session) and Understanding the Planning Application process and how to have your say (second session) which will both take place online.

To book on either training session (or both) visit our website:

<https://www.cpreherts.org.uk/news/understanding-planning-our-training-webinars/>

Abby Coften
Chief Executive

Join Us

If you are not already a CPRE member, please join us!

It's easy to join online on our website at

<http://www.cpreherts.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-member/>

or

email us at office@cpreherts.org.uk

CPRE Hertfordshire Merchandise

You can see our full product range and order online at <https://www.cpreherts.org.uk/get-involved/merchandise/> and pay with your debit or credit card or use the order form enclosed with this publication to pay by cheque or BACS. £4 p&p per order.

Please support us by placing an order today. Each sale helps fund our work to protect, promote and enhance Hertfordshire's countryside.

Christmas Cards

Our Christmas Cards are all beautiful Hertfordshire scenes. They are in two sizes, A6 landscape or 13cm square.

They represent great value, with the individual card price having been held for 2 years. Please purchase early to avoid disappointment.

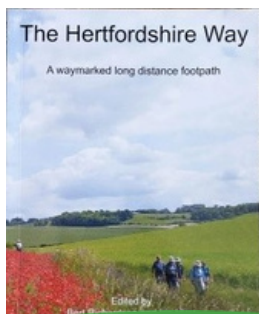
Pack A
10 x randomly assorted cards
Square and A6
Inside: assorted
£6.00 per pack

Note: pack contents may vary from that shown and more than one of the same image may be included



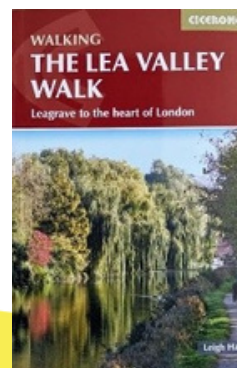
Books

We have a lovely selection of books which make great Christmas gifts
Two outstanding walking guidebooks.



The Hertfordshire Way £10, the official guide to the 195 mile waymarked footpath around our county.

Walking The Lea Valley Walk £12.95, part of the widely-acclaimed Cicerone series of walking books.



Pack B
5 x Winter Oak
A6
Inside: Season's Greetings
Photo: E Hamilton
£3.50 per pack



Pack C
5 x Whitwell A6
Inside: With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year
Photo: C Howe
£3.50 per pack



Pack D
5 x East Hall, near St Paul's Walden
A6
Inside: Season's Greetings
Photo: C Howe
£3.50 per pack



Pack E
5 x White Park Cattle
A6
Inside: Blank
Photo: E Hamilton
£3.50 per pack



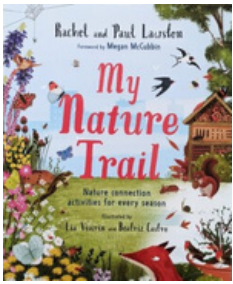
Pack F
5 x Farm near Berkhamsted
A6
Inside: Season's Greetings
Photo: Mark Adams
£3.50 per pack



Pack G
5 x Frosted Teasel
Square
Inside: Blank
Photo: E Hamilton
£3.50 per pack



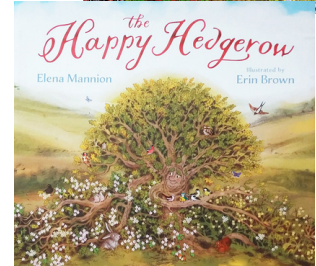
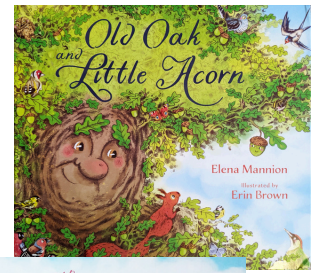
Books cont.



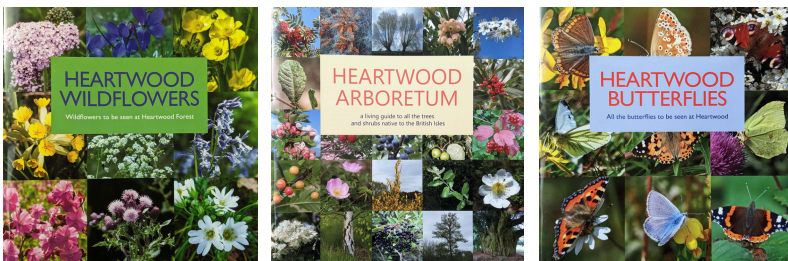
My Nature Trail, £10.99, a beautifully illustrated book which will captivate budding young nature lovers (and their adults). It's packed with a variety of fun outdoor nature activities, and will help children develop skills and knowledge about wildlife and conservation.

A high-quality paperback, 80 pages, original edition, published in October 2023. It's the perfect gift for young children or grandchildren. Suitable for children aged from three.

Old Oak & Little Acorn £12.99, and The Happy Hedgerow £10.99, charming children's books by local author Elena Mannion, with detailed full colour illustrations by Erin Brown. They cover important conservation themes and are suitable for children aged from four.



A trilogy of beautiful full-colour guidebooks produced by the Heartwood Monitoring Group of volunteers at Heartwood Forest. Each book is a high quality paperback packed with photographs and descriptive information to make species identification easy. £9.99 each



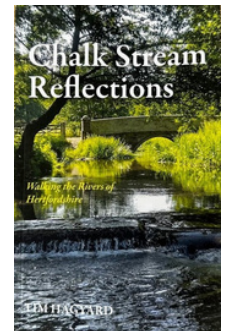
Heartwood Wildflowers, covering 170 species of wildflower that grow in Hertfordshire

Heartwood Arboretum, covering all 60 species of trees and shrubs native to the British Isles, most of which can be found across Hertfordshire

Heartwood Butterflies, featuring 30 species of butterflies to be found throughout the county

Chalkstream Reflections. In 2020, former CPRE Hertfordshire Planning Manager Tim Hagyard set out to walk the entire length of each of Hertfordshire's chalk streams. These globally-rare and precious waterways, and the wildlife habitats that they support, are under tremendous pressure from increasing abstraction and pollution. Tim wanted to explore the health of these rivers and enjoy their beauty.

The book is enjoyable and educational but with a serious message and Tim weaves his personal reflections and recommendations into vivid descriptions of his experiences during the walk. £11.99



Blank Greetings Cards - perfect for every occasion



Four Seasons - four each of 2 exclusive Hertfordshire scenes per pack. Spring Bluebells and Winter Sunset or Summer Meadows and Autumn Mists. Cards measure approx. 15cm square. All images by award-winning photographer Chris Howe £8 per pack

Children's nature art - pack of 5 with one each of 5 different images taken from our popular Children's Art Competition. Size A6. £4.00 per pack



Heavy Cotton Tote Bags

Eye catching and functional, they also make great little gifts. Approx. 36 x 41cm with long handles to fit comfortably over the shoulder. £4 each





The countryside charity
Hertfordshire



Looking across the upper
Bulbourne Valley from near Tring

"To my daughter, I leave this
beautiful countryside to you"

Leaving a gift in your will helps CPRE
Hertfordshire protect the places you love.

<https://www.cpreherts.org.uk/get-involved/leave-a-gift-in-your-will/>

Email office@cpreherts.org.uk or call **01438 717587** for
more information

CPRE Hertfordshire is Registered Charity no. 1162419