

Spring 2023 Newsletter



The countryside charity
Staffordshire

CPRE Staffordshire Spring Newsletter

SPRING NEWS FROM CPRE STAFFORDSHIRE

WWW.CPRESTAFFORDSHIRE.ORG.UK

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Hello and welcome to our spring newsletter. If you've received this newsletter in the post, that either means that we don't have an email address for you, or that because of the GDPR, we haven't had confirmation that you wish to continue receiving emails from CPRE. If this applies, please email Supporter Services (supporterservices@cpre.org.uk) to confirm that you are happy to receive CPRE emails.

As well as reducing our printing costs, signing up for e-mail newsletters means you will get your news earlier. We will never pass your email address on to anyone else. Please also let us know if you do NOT wish to receive the newsletter or other communications from us.

Please let us know if you would like a large-print copy of the newsletter.

28th April: Closing date for Green Schools Trophy applications.

8th May: Big Help Out

31st July: Closing date for the 2024 Countryside on Camera calendar competition

Late August/early September (date TBC): Picnic at Ingestre Orangery, tour of St Mary's Church, Ingestre, and AGM.

Above photo credit: Blithfield ploughed field, Ryan Wood.

Chairman's address

Signs of spring are now well in evidence - hedges are leafing out, blossom is appearing and the daffodils are out in force - as are the April showers! Whilst I'm enjoying the lighter evenings, I'm pleased to report that we made good use of the dark winter nights by holding our first-ever stargazing event in February. More than 60 children from Beavers, Scouts and Brownies enjoyed a free event at Beaudesert, led by professional astronomers from Keele University. All the children had a chance to look at different stars and constellations through powerful telescopes and to learn about what you can see with just the naked eye. We are very grateful to the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership for funding the event.

The stargazing event is just one of the ways in which we are collaborating with the AONB Partnership. CPRE volunteers also helped farmers and landowners in Bednall and



Gentleshaw plant trees and hedges as part of their Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme. We hope to be organising lots more hedge-planting events if we are successful in our bid for Hedgerow Heroes funding from national CPRE - watch this space! If you might be interested in volunteering to plant trees and hedges next winter, please register your interest via this online form, or contact the office:

https://form.jotform.com/CPRE_Staffordshire/hedgerow-heroes

For the keen photographers amongst you, our photography competition is offering the chance to win Canalside Farm vouchers and have your

photographs featured in a 2024 calendar showcasing the beautiful and varied landscapes of Staffordshire. Please spread the word to anyone who might be interested in entering.

Sadly, we also hear a lot in the news about how our rivers are increasingly polluted by sewage, and almost any walk in the countryside or bike ride on rural roads will show how much litter continues to blight the landscape. We are hoping that parish councils and community groups will get involved with this year's Big Help Out to mark the King's coronation by organising litter-picks in their area. There will be a prize for the best photo of litter collected!

I would also like to canvas the views of our members about possible social events. A curry and quiz night, pub crawl, countryside walk, or visit to a stately home are some of our ideas we are considering. Please do complete the very short survey to let me know your preference. This year's AGM will be held in either late August or

early September, and will also be a bit different. Instead of a guest speaker, we will have a guided tour of the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Ingestre, which is the only church outside London to have been designed by Sir Christopher Wren. There will also be a picnic at Ingestre Orangery, where the 'business' bit of the AGM will be held.

Lastly, I'd like to congratulate Anna Woolliscroft, one of our trustees, for her amazing achievement in climbing Kilimanjaro to raise funds for the mental health charity Mind Over Mountains. I'd also like to welcome new volunteers Aine Courtney and John Clowes, who will be helping us monitor and respond to planning applications, and our new trustee, Dave Evans. They will all be a great asset to CPRE Staffordshire.

With best wishes,
Mohammed Khuram.

FUTURE EVENTS



Picnic at Ingestre Orangery and tour of Ingestre church

Please join us for a late summer picnic at Ingestre Orangery. We plan to have a guided tour of the nearby Church of St Mary the Virgin - the only church outside London to have been designed by Sir Christopher Wren. We will then have our AGM at the Orangery. This will be in either late August or early September - further information will be sent out nearer the time.

Big Help Out



We're inviting parish councils and communities to mark His Majesty the King's coronation in May by holding 'Green Clean' litter-picking events.

Thousands of organisations across the country are getting together as part of the Big Help Out to mark the coronation. Organising local litter-picks would be a great way of helping to clean up our countryside, villages and towns. It also helps members of the community take an active role in improving their local area, and will be a big help if you are considering entering the Best Kept Village Community competition.

CPRE Staffordshire invites parish councils to register their litter-picks with us. We'll plot all the litter-picks on the map and keep a record of how

much litter is collected across the county as a whole. Parish councils will be responsible for organising their events providing litter-pickers and bags, and liaising with Streetscene to have the rubbish collected. We can provide a template risk assessment if required.

For more information, or to register your interest in taking part, please contact the office.

Hedge-planting volunteers wanted!

CPRE Staffordshire has applied for Hedgerow Heroes funding from the national CPRE charity. If our bid is successful, we will be aiming to organise a number of planting events around the county in autumn/winter 2023-24. To help assess our volunteer capacity, please fill in our online form or contact the office if you might be interested in taking part.

There may also be further opportunities help farmers and landowners near Cannock Chase plant trees

and hedges through the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.

https://form.jotform.com/CPRE_Staffordshire/hedgerow-heroes

LOCAL NEWS



In January, CPRE Staffordshire helped arrange an event at which volunteers from the Prince's Trust (top photo) joined staff and students plant trees and strip turf to create an orchard and wildlife garden on Staffordshire University's Leek Road campus.

Farmers and landowners in and near Cannock Chase AONB can apply for funding from Defra's Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, which helps farmers and land managers provide benefits for nature, climate, people and places. CPRE staff and volunteers helped two landowners in Bednall and Gentleshaw plant a large number of trees

and hedges in March - a big thank you to everyone who helped out.



In February, we marked CPRE's annual Star Count by holding our first-ever stargazing event at Beaudesert Outdoor Activity Centre. Thanks to generous funding from the Cannock Chase AONB partnership, 65 children from Beavers, Brownies and Scouts, plus 22 adult leaders and helpers, were able to experience the wonders of the night sky.

Astronomers from Keele University's Observatory brought along their telescopes to point out stars and constellations. We hope to run a similar event next winter.



The Cannock Chase AONB Partnership has now

produced a Good Lighting Guide which will be put to the Joint Committee at its next meeting.

Photography competition



Bluebells at Aqualate, Tony Leech.

Calling all photographers! We're launching a FREE photography competition with a view to producing a 2024 calendar depicting Staffordshire's wonderful and diverse countryside.

We will be looking for a variety of locations, seasons and subject matter (for example woodlands, waterways, farming, and wildlife). Photographs should have been taken in Staffordshire within the past two years, although entrants do not need to live in Staffordshire.

The top three winning photographers will be awarded the following prizes:

1st Prize: A £40 Canalside Farm voucher and a free calendar.

2nd Prize: A £20 Canalside Farm voucher and a free calendar.

3rd Prize: A free calendar.

There will be further opportunity for both the winners and other photographers to have their photographs featured in the calendar. This will be on sale to CPRE Staffordshire members, supporters, and the general public.

The closing date is midnight on Monday 31st July 2023.

The full rules of the competition and details of how to enter are available on our website.

Green Schools Trophy



We are once again inviting all Staffordshire schools to showcase their conservation

and environmental projects for a chance to win £50 cash and hold the CPRE Green Schools' Trophy for a year.

We're on the lookout for inspiring projects that help make the local environment a better place. This could be through cutting down on single-use plastics, practical conservation work, creating wildlife habitats, promoting energy-saving or waste reduction/recycling, green transport schemes, or any other original idea your school may come up with.

The closing date for entries for this year's award is **Friday 28th April 2023**. Please contact the office for further details.

CPRE NATIONAL NEWS

Star Count: CPRE's annual citizen science survey, in which people count the number of stars visible with the naked eye in the Orion constellation, took place from 17-26 February. The results will be announced during International Dark Sky Week (15-22 April), and will be used to produce a map show which areas

have the worst light pollution.



Government consultation on the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**: the final OneCPRE response states that local authorities should not have to demonstrate a deliverable five-year housing supply. CPRE also recommends the incorporation of the following guidelines in the new NPPF to ensure the loss of valuable farmland is minimised - a brownfield-first policy, a greater steer towards medium- and high-density new housing, and a firm presumption against development on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land.



Hedgerows: the government has announced an ambitious target to create or restore 30,000 miles of hedgerows by 2037, and 45,000-miles of hedgerows by 2050, under the new Environmental Improvement Plan 2023.

Deposit Return Scheme: CPRE is reiterating its call for a comprehensive DRS that covers all materials in the wake of the government decision to focus on plastics when the new, much delayed-scheme, is put in place. CPRE's commitment from then environment secretary Michael Gove to implement a DRS in 2018, the government continues to drag its feet. Meanwhile devolved administrations of Wales and Scotland have created their own schemes.



Rural homelessness: the countryside is beset by a 'hidden homelessness' crisis driven by soaring housing costs and a gaping shortfall in local authority funding, a new report co-funded by CPRE shows.

LOCAL PLANNING ROUND-UP

Stafford Borough Council

22/36536/OUT Outline Planning Permission for the erection of forty dwellings (Use Class C3), access and parking with some matters reserved | Land Off Old Croft Road Walton On The Hill Stafford (pictured below). We are pleased to report that this application was refused. We had objected as it is outside of the settlement boundary and not in an area allocated for

development in the Local Plan.



22/36499/FUL: Proposed development of 10 new dwellings and associated infrastructure. Land Adjacent To Cornwall Drive And Truro Way Off Baswich Staffordshire. Commented on planning matters but also pointed out some of the points in the application's favour.

Our response to the **Local Plan Preferred Options** consultation stated that we did not see the case for the uplift in housing numbers from the New Standard Method. We also stated our opposition to the provision of over 80 hectares of new employment land, the greenfield development of Meecebrook and other greenfield housing allocations.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

23/00002/OUT: Land North Of Mucklestone Wood Lane And East Of Rock Lane Loggerheads Market Drayton Shropshire TF9 4EF. Outline planning application for the erection of up to 200 dwellings, associated infrastructure and open space. Objected as the site is clearly outside of the village envelope, in a rural setting, will cause sprawl into the rural setting of Mucklestone Wood Lane, and will adversely impact the character of the area.

South Staffordshire Council

Both CPRE Staffordshire and CPRE West Midlands responded to the Publication Plan - the final stage of a new Local Plan before it goes to the Planning Inspectorate (see our website for the full responses). CPRE West Midlands provided detailed evidence to show that there is easily enough land already allocated to meet the needs for housing in South Staffordshire. CPRE

wants South Staffordshire to drop plans to build on Green Belt for houses which are needed in the Black Country.

CPRE Staffordshire expressed concern that South Staffordshire is unnecessarily and inappropriately proposing development in the Green Belt and greenfield sites well in excess of the need of its own residents and migration assessed using the New Standard Method.

South Staffordshire Council subsequently announced that it will not be submitting its scheme to the Planning Inspectorate until it receives clarity on the Government's latest proposals over housing numbers.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

SMD/2022/0667: Full planning permission for residential development of 30 homes, including the creation of new access, car parking and ancillary landscaping. Land at Uttoxeter Road, Upper Tean,

Staffordshire. Objected as it contradicted the Neighbourhood Plan; development in open countryside.

While our office staff and executive committee keep a keen eye on local planning applications and issues, there may be something happening in your area that you feel has been overlooked. If you think the countryside, rural environment or Green Belt land near you is under threat, please contact us and we may be able to investigate.

Volunteers' Corner

We are pleased to welcome Dave Evans as a new trustee. Dave lives on the south of Stoke-on-Trent (Lightwood).

He has held senior positions for many years within the UK and European steel industry. He has sat on a number of European trade committees and actively and successfully led trade action against non-compliant (unsafe) trade from China into the European market. He has

also provided consultancy assistance on numerous projects around the world.



Away from his professional career, David has been Chair of the Lightwood Community Group since 2014. The group has been successful in campaigning against inappropriate planning applications in the Green Belt. Joining the CPRE as a trustee is important to David as he wants to help other community groups across the county who may face similar challenges.

David has a daughter and two Labrador dogs and is passionate about helping to protect the countryside for future generations.

Recycle for CPRE Staffordshire!

Yes Please

- ✔ Gold or Silver Jewellery
- ✔ Watches
- ✔ Stamps
- ✔ Costume Jewellery
- ✔ Banknotes & coins
- ✔ First Day Covers

The **ONLY** electrical devices we accept are:

- ✔ Mobile Phones
- ✔ Cameras
- ✔ Video Cameras
- ✔ Sat Navs
- ✔ Electronic gaming devices
- ✔ Ipods/MP3 players
- ✔ Tablet Computers

No Thank you

- ✘ Laptops
- ✘ Home phones
- ✘ Fax machines
- ✘ DVD players
- ✘ Printers
- ✘ Modems or routers
- ✘ Kitchen appliances
- ✘ Porcelain or glass items
- ✘ Personal Grooming items (straighteners razors, hair dryers, etc.)

We continue to collect a variety of electronics, including mobile phones and gaming devices, jewelry, used stamps and foreign and old coins and banknotes to raise funds through Recycling for Good Causes. Please see the list above for what is and isn't accepted. Unfortunately, laptops are no longer accepted but tablet computers are. We raised a grand total of £267.70 over the 2021-22 financial year.

Aroma Tranquility, based Castlefields, Newport Road, Stafford ST16 1BQ and neighbour Roots Larder (plastic-free shopping), have a box for collecting the items in their recycling shed. You can take items for recycling between 9am and 4pm on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday (look for the big Shoe Shed sign).

If you are not able to take your items to Aroma Tranquility, they can either be dropped in to the Stafford office (by arrangement only - please call [01785 278230](tel:01785278230) or email protect@cprestaffordshire.org.uk) or post to us or, if small items, post to the Freepost address below in a no larger than A5 envelope:

FREEPOST RSXA-GJBY-ARRZ
Charity Name: CPRE Staffordshire
Unit 14
Amber Business Village
Amber Close
Tamworth
B77 4RP

If you have large amounts, please either contact us directly or call Recycling for Good Causes on [0800 633 5323](tel:08006335323) (they are based in Tamworth).

CPRE Staffordshire is a registered charity, number 219443. It promotes and encourages the protection and improvement of the countryside of Staffordshire: its towns, villages and rural environment. Anyone who values the Staffordshire countryside is invited to join us, either as a supporter of our work, or as an active participant.

<https://www.cprestaffordshire.org.uk>

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Current CPRE Staffordshire Executive Committee Officers:

Chairman: Mohammed Khuram

President: His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire Mr Ian Dudson, CBE KStJ

Vice President: Philip Atkins OBE

Vice Chair & Social Secretary: Mrs Anne Clendon BEM

Executive Committee Members: Steve Anderson, Mary Booth, Dave Evans, Steve Hopkins and Anna Woolliscroft.

Join Us!

If you would like to join CPRE, please go to:

<https://www.cprestaffordshire.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-member/>

As a member you will receive discount to attractions nationwide, 15% off Cotswold Outdoor store and national and local news about events, your local countryside and future planning.

Please remember to state **Staffordshire** as the local group or branch you are joining through.