

CPRE Staffordshire Spring 2026 Newsletter

[View this email in
your browser](#)

100
YEARS



**Campaign to Protect
Rural England**
Staffordshire

Spring 2026 Newsletter



Walton Play park, Stone. Image taken by Noel Bennett.

Dear <<First Name>>

This spring carries a particular significance for me as it will be my

final message to you as Chairman of CPRE Staffordshire. Since taking on this role in 2022, this time gives me a moment to reflect on what we have achieved together. I am deeply proud of the commitment shown by our volunteers, members, partners, and supporters; all have given their support to ensure our countryside is protected, promoted and enhanced for generations to come. During my tenure as Chair, I have been particularly proud of having strengthened our voice on planning issues with a growing number of responses enabled by an increase in Planning Volunteers and championed the importance of green spaces for our visually impaired community through a series of guided walks. I am also pleased that we have enhanced our countryside through a series of planting events, our annual Green School Trophy and celebrating the unsung work of our wider community with our Annual Awards held alongside the Staffordshire Best Kept Village Competition.

Our Branch governance has developed too; with a larger Board of Trustees, a calendar of twelve regular annual events, and much more stabilised finances, we can all look back on our significant and tangible progress together. With us celebrating our 90th anniversary this year, I am very confident the Branch will reach its centenary in 2036.

Although I am stepping down from the role of Chairman, I will remain as a Trustee and continue my support.

I would never consider stepping down if we had not already identified a capable and committed successor to lead our Branch. Knowing that the charity will be in safe hands makes this decision possible. Fresh energy and ideas from a new leader is always a good thing. I am pleased to announce that our Trustee, Sarah Cooke, has been elected Chair. She is already leading on the AGM and our 90th Year Anniversary events and other matters. I have every confidence that the Branch will continue to thrive under her leadership, and advance our shared mission to 'promote, protect, and enhance the Staffordshire countryside'.

Many thanks to all of you, our Members, for your trust, your encouragement and your support. It has been a privilege to serve.

With best wishes,

Mohammed.

Chairman, CPRE Staffordshire 2022-2026.



Meet Sarah Cooke, CPRE Staffordshire's next Chair:

I've lived in Staffordshire for most of my life so my heart is most definitely here. Coming back to the area after living elsewhere for work, I now appreciate the diversity, culture and landscape that Staffordshire offers.

Having been a Trustee for CPRE Staffordshire for almost a year, it felt a natural step up to take over from Mohammed. I'm delighted to be Acting Chair and even more delighted that Mohammed is staying on as a Trustee.

I hope to build on all the excellent work Mohammed and the Trustees have delivered over the past four years, with a focus on inclusion, collaboration and community. We're starting to work with other charities in the area, supporting community groups and raising awareness of CPRE with a wider audience. We will continue to work tirelessly in our planning activities to protect our county and support its communities, and deliver our established events such as the forthcoming litter pick and visually impaired walks.

As this is our Centenary year we are already planning our AGM meeting in September. I look forward to meeting some of our members at this event if not before.

Future Events

Keep the Litter Out of Our River - Litter Pick, Saturday 11th April

Stafford Sub Aqua Club and CPRE Staffordshire are organising a litter

pick on Saturday 11th April (2-4pm). See our [website for details](#).

Celebrate Staffordshire Day - accessible walk 1st May

We are hosting a series of accessible countryside walks for our 90th year, carefully planned for people with visual impairments. These walks offer a quiet, inclusive way to experience nature, focusing on sound, texture, and atmosphere. See our [website for details](#). See other Staffordshire Day Countryside Walks on the Staffordshire Moorlands Walking Festival [Website](#).

Local News



Green Schools Trophy

Entries Now Open! All Staffordshire schools are invited to showcase their conservation and environmental projects for a chance to win a micro-pond workshop and hold the trophy for a year.

We are looking for inspiring projects that contribute to the protection, conservation, or improvement of the local environment. 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. Find out more on our [website](#).

Applications Open: February 2026.

Applications Close: Friday 22nd May at 5pm.

Winners announced: June 2026.



Dark Skies February 2026

We had a wonderful time in February celebrating the importance of our dark skies. We were joined by Fradley Beavers group at the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Wolseley Bridge for an exciting evening exploring the wonders of the night skies. We created clay stars in a craft activity, sat around a cosy campfire and listened to stories of night-time tales and nocturnal creatures, by Julie Moss from [Fern and Fables](#). We also went on a night time exploration around the Wolseley centre with bat detectors!

County Meeting - March 2026

We held our first meeting of 2026 with local councillors from across Staffordshire to discuss how we can best work together to Promote, Protect and Enhance Staffordshire's countryside. Some of the topics we discussed include:

- The importance of increasing public awareness of wildfires, particularly in the summer months. CPRE Staffordshire will work with local authorities and Staffordshire fire services to support wildfire awareness campaigns.
- Public transport across Staffordshire where ideas were circulated on how we can support the improvement of transport services and increase accessibility for rural communities.
- Local planning matters were discussed in detail, including CPRE Staffordshire's support for rooftop solar.

Regional CPRE News

The Annual General Meeting of the West Midlands CPRE Regional Group was held at the end of January. Mark Sullivan (Warwickshire) was re-elected Chairman; Peter King (Worcestershire) was re-elected Vice-Chairman; and Charles Green (Shropshire) was re-elected Treasurer. Matters raised included the developing role of the national Network Assembly, the adequacy of membership information

received from National Office, and the housing requirements of the emerging Local Plans for the Black Country (with their impact on the surrounding Green Belt).

The Network Assembly met on 3rd March. The agenda was split into three parts (Matters for Discussion, County Projects and Matters of Report). The first included whether CPRE should explore the use of AI in planning and beyond; progress on the future CPRE Strategy Framework; and Branches' experience of anaerobic digesters. Essex CPRE then outlined the successes and challenges facing a large branch, while Oxfordshire described how they are providing local communities with support and guidance in the transition to rooftop solar. Matters of Report ranged from the latest on Local Government Re-Organisation and the proposed Spatial Development Strategies, the response to consultation on the new draft National Planning Policy Framework.

National CPRE News

CPRE responds to Land Use Framework publication

CPRE has responded to the publication of the government's Land Use Framework, welcoming its ambition while urging stronger safeguards to ensure the countryside is protected as competing demands on land intensify. [Read more.](#)

CPRE welcomes rooftop solar plans for new homes

CPRE has welcomed the government's latest announcement on solar energy, including new rules requiring solar panels on new homes. [Read More.](#)

New CPRE exhibition marks 100 years of countryside protection

To mark our centenary year, a new exhibition at The Museum of English Rural Life (The MERL) celebrates 100 years of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) and the charity's pivotal role in shaping and protecting England's countryside. [Read more.](#)

Seven new town sites proposed by government: our response

CPRE has given a cautious welcome to six of the the government's seven proposed new town locations. You can read the full article on CPRE Nationals website: [Read More.](#)

Three-quarters want more protection for UK countryside, new poll reveals

A new poll by More in Common, for CPRE, reveals that 86% of Britons support Green Belt and three-quarters of young people want more of the UK countryside protected, though most don't trust leaders to deliver on this. [Read more.](#)

Research shows most 'grey belt' homes planned on unspoilt countryside

New research from CPRE, the countryside charity, reveals that the government's 'grey belt' policy is paving the way for large-scale development on England's unspoilt rural landscapes – not, as ministers promised, unused car parks and derelict petrol stations. [Read more.](#)

Local Planning Roundup

South Staffordshire:

25/00874/OUTM Outline planning for up to 550 residential dwellings, land for an 80 unit extra care facility, land for a community shop, land for an electric vehicle car club, associated access, infrastructure, open space, landscaping and drainage.

Land At Heath House Lane Codsall. Awaiting Decision

Staffordshire Moorlands:

SMD/2025/0385 Proposed change of use of existing barns building, Menage and Land area shown edged red on the enclosed application plans, together with new vehicle access, gateway and hardstanding constructions with vehicle turning and car parking areas and tree planting, to form a Landscape Stone Products Retail and Trade Supply Business, to be known as Higherland Stone.

Caverswall , Staffordshire , ST11 9EU Planning Permission – Refused

Lichfield:

25/01221/FULM Installation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) including associated infrastructure and landscaping.

Rugeley Road Armitage Rugeley

Pending

26/00016/OUT Outline application for the erection of up to 4 No. dwellings, with all other matters reserved (except access).

Land Rear Of Boythorpe And Wyndfield Walsall Road
Pipehill Pending

Stafford:

25/41516/OUT Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except for principal means of access), for development comprising up to 480 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), specialist housing for older people (Use Class C2 or C3), medical centre/primary care hub (Use Class E) and primary school (Use Class F.1), with associated open space, landscaping and other associated works including infrastructure, earthworks and drainage

Land To West Of Blurtons Lane, South Of Stone Road, North Of Stafford Road Eccleshall Stafford Staffordshire Awaiting decision

25/40683/OUT Outline planning application for up to 100 dwellings, open space and associated infrastructure (all matters reserved except for means of access)

Land Off Dickys Lane Woodseaves Stafford
Staffordshire Awaiting decision

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 near you is under threat, please contact us and we may be able to investigate.

Leaving a Gift in Your Will

For every chapter.

First steps, first home, first deal, a growing team, a growing family, contracts signed, plans drawn up, loved ones lost, legacies protected, minds changed, businesses sold, new premises, the next move, a fresh start, a final word.

Some chapters are simple. Others change everything.

You won't need us on every page, but when it counts, we're right there beside you with legal advice that's clear, steady, and made for what comes next.



Ansons Law

Find out more at ansons.law

Lichfield 01543 263 456 Sutton Coldfield 0121 716 3716
 Cannock 01543 466 660 Dudley 0121 550 0010







Why gifts in wills are so important

Your gift can ensure that the countryside is rich in nature, accessible for all and protected for the future.

How to leave a gift in your will
 Legacy gifts to a charity like CPRE are inheritance tax free. Plus, if you leave more than 10% you can reduce the amount of tax you pay on your remaining taxable estate.

When you are ready to make or update your will and would like to leave a gift to CPRE, here is the essential information you will need for your solicitor:

- Name: The Staffordshire Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Address: CPRE Staffordshire, Eastgate House, 79/79a Eastgate Street, Stafford, ST16 2LG
- Charity Number: 219443

Our promises to you

- We'll always treat you and your wishes with respect and confidentiality.
- Your legacy will be in capable hands. We've been successfully enhancing, promoting and protecting Staffordshire's beautiful countryside since 1936. We'll continue to work in your name for many more generations.
- We appreciate will gifts of any size.
- If you have any queries about leaving a gift in your will to CPRE, we will always be available to answer your questions honestly and openly.

To find out more visit www.cprestaffordshire.org.uk

A countryside for us all. Forever.



The countryside charity Staffordshire

Leaving a gift in your will to CPRE Staffordshire would help us campaign for a countryside is rich in nature, accessible for all and protected for the future. A future where hedgerows are restored to tackle climate change and local communities get a say on what gets built where they live. A future where brownfield sites are recycled, valuable farmland is protected, and deep, dark skies are enjoyed by all.

CPRE has partnered with Ansons Solicitors to provide high-quality will-writing services. While there is no obligation to leave a gift in your will with this service, we encourage you do so, to safeguard our future in the County.

If you choose to let us know about your gift, we can stay in touch and keep you informed of our plans, events and the work we do, and invite you to dedicated lunches and special events.

[Find out more about leaving a legacy to CPRE Staffordshire →](#)

A reminder of our calendar of events in 2026:

January: Planting Preparation

February: Dark Skies Night

March: County committee meeting

April: Litter Picking

May: Staffordshire Day walk for visually impaired

June: Presenting Green School Trophy Award

July: County committee meeting

August: Calendar Competition

September: Countryside Day and AGM

October: Presentation of Living Countryside Awards

November: County committee meeting

December: Volunteers' and trustees' Christmas lunch

Current CPRE Staffordshire Executive Committee Officers:

President: HM Lord Lieutenant Elizabeth Barnes CBE

Vice President: Philip Atkins OBE

Acting Chair: Sarah Cooke

Vice Chair: Mary Booth

Executive Committee Members: Sarah Burgess, Kudzai Chivenga, Dave Evans, Steve Hopkins, Mohammed Khuram and Steve Sankey.

Honorary Treasurer: Chris Emsley

Principal Planning Advisor: Paul Windmill

Copyright © 2026 CPRE Staffordshire, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

Eastgate House

79/79a Eastgate Street

Stafford

ST16 2LG

www.cprestaffordshire.org.uk

Email: protect@cprestaffordshire.org.uk

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)