



# Annual Review

## Gloucestershire

Campaign to Protect Rural England

# 2017

[www.cpreglos.org.uk](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk)



## Chairman's Statement

I WAS delighted to be elected as the new Chair of CPRE Gloucestershire at the AGM last May. Since joining the Executive Committee in 2016, I have become increasingly impressed by the quality and tenacity of CPRE supporters across the County as they fight to protect our very special part of rural England. Whether it's planning applications, road developments, wildlife protection, footpaths, mineral extraction or rural housing issues, CPRE Gloucestershire is to be found in the middle of the battlefield, our dedicated team of expert volunteers working hard to get the best solution for our countryside.

None of this could be achieved without the expertise and hard work of our various Districts. Given their extensive knowledge of local concerns, the Districts play a vital role in local campaigns.

Our work is much

strengthened too by the range of research studies that CPRE National Office undertakes which provide compelling evidence to inform Government policy. We know that CPRE lobbying behind the scenes often has a considerable impact, as we heard from retiring Chief Executive Shaun Spiers when he addressed last year's AGM at the Royal Agricultural University in Cirencester.

Although CPRE is a unique organisation in its focus on protecting rural England's life and landscape, we have many interests in common with other organisations. Working with them is invaluable in giving our countryside a louder voice and we are delighted that this year our active collaborations have included the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC); the NFU; Ramblers and the Local Nature Partnership among others. We

were also pleased to support the launch of the 'Building with Nature' initiative that will encourage house-building companies to make new building as environmentally sustainable as possible. Issues like the role of AONBs, the green belt and the plan to improve the A417 have been high profile this year and are likely to remain so. We are grateful for the opportunity for regular dialogues with our local MPs on these subjects which help to ensure that our voice is heard in Parliament and by Ministers.

In May we were delighted to welcome Lucy Blyth to our Executive team as our lead on Communications. Lucy has a wealth of experience of campaigning in the charitable and other sectors and has been able to do a great deal already to get more press coverage of our campaigns and to update our social media presence. Please do



Lucy Blyth

like our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/cpreglos/](https://www.facebook.com/cpreglos/) and follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/CPREGlous](https://twitter.com/CPREGlous) to get the very latest news of what is going on in CPRE Gloucestershire.

CPRE depends for its success on the huge variety of contributions that its supporters make. I would like to thank each one of you individually, for playing your part in helping to protect rural England so that future generations can enjoy the unique heritage that we do. It's definitely worth fighting for!

**Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE**  
Branch Chair



The Wye Valley viewed from the Devil's Pulpit

Richard Lloyd

## INTRODUCTION

**T**HIS ANNUAL Review highlights CPRE Gloucestershire's major areas of activity during the 2017 calendar year, notably:

- Engaging with the important process of local plan preparation and review across the county
- Scrutinising planning applications and making representations where development would be particularly harmful, and engaging in planning appeals where necessary
- A renewed focus on raising the profile of the Branch where we appointed a dedicated Campaigns and

Marketing Manager to promote our work and successes

- Working with other organisations on a number of joint initiatives
- Contributing to CPRE's national level work and to the work of CPRE South West
- Running our successful CPRE Gloucestershire Rural Excellence Awards where a record number of ten Awards were made in the year.

## CAMPAIGNING ISSUES

### Local Plans

GETTING LOCAL Plans right remains of fundamental importance to the future of Gloucestershire's countryside and rural communities. We have continued to devote considerable resources to ensure CPRE's views are heard in plan preparation.

The Joint Core Strategy for Gloucester,

Cheltenham and Tewkesbury (the JCS) has at last been adopted. While by no means perfect – the housing numbers are still too high in our view having been inflated by unrealistic job creation aspirations – its adoption will at last give a period of greater certainty to the planning process

and enable the more detailed Local Plans being prepared by the three local authorities to be progressed. We hope that inappropriate speculative development applications can now be resisted more effectively.

In the autumn, we took part in the examination of the Cotswolds Local Plan. The central

**I**N THIS section we report on our main campaigning issues in 2017.

issue for us is overprovision of 2000 more houses than the Objectively Assessed Housing Need. Much of the area is within the Cotswolds AONB where pressure for more market housing is high. There are no policies for phasing development which we believe will inevitably lead to development well ahead of the annual targets for additional housing.

In Stroud District, work on the Local Plan Review has begun. Most of the development pressure is along the M5 corridor and further strategic housing allocations are envisaged to address needs. Traffic generation around a number of the proposed locations is a particular concern. Under the duty to cooperate the District will remain under pressure to accommodate more of Gloucester's housing needs.

In the Forest of Dean an Allocations Development Plan Document was at examination during the year.

We continued to make representations on the long delayed Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan.



David Bayne

*View towards  
Cleeve from Harp  
Hill, on the edge  
of Cheltenham*



## Planning Casework

SCRUTINISING PLANNING applications and making representations where development would be particularly harmful continues to be an essential part of our day to day work. All our CPRE Districts are involved. Our main concerns are typically the sustainability of the location and impact on the landscape. These issues are important everywhere and particularly in our AONBs. In this work we were again admirably supported by our planning consultant David Crofts.

It is encouraging to report that we are beginning to see more success in resisting inappropriate development in a number of villages in the JCS area and elsewhere despite arguments over 5 year housing land supply. Landscape impact concerns and conflicts with neighbourhood plans have won the day at appeals.

Many cases were considered in 2017 across our Districts. A selection of the more significant ones includes:

- Proposed development of 30 houses on an elevated site within the Cotswolds AONB at the Leasows **Chipping Campden**. The development was allowed on appeal.
- Major development of 2350 dwellings and commercial/industrial units on the edge of **Cirencester** at Chesterton. We secured a lower pace of development in the emerging Cotswolds Local Plan.
- Proposed development of 365 houses along Kingshill Lane which would damage the approach to **Cirencester** from the south. The development was refused and subsequently not allocated in the Local Plan.
- Two planning applications for an industrial scale anaerobic digester plant at **Fiddington** were robustly opposed. Following refusal, both applications were to be considered at a joint appeal hearing in March 2018 (now withdrawn).
- Proposed development of 65 houses at Trumans Farm, **Gotherington**, which would have affected the setting of the Cotswolds AONB. The development was dismissed at appeal.
- Despite objections by local people, CPRE, Cheltenham Borough Council and others, and condemnation by the Joint Core Strategy Inspector, Tewkesbury Borough Council permitted 377 houses on the edge of **Leckhampton** adjacent to the Cotswolds AONB. A judicial review upheld the Council's decision and an appeal to a higher court was not allowed.
- Outline plans for an estate of 38 houses opposite Dene Magna School outside the settlement boundary of **Mitcheldean**. The Allocations Plan, now



*The view to Cleeve Hill from across threatened land on the Winchcombe side of Prestbury.*

David Bayne

approaching adoption, indicates that new building can be accommodated inside the settlement boundary. The application was pending decision at the end of the year.

- Proposed development of the current Forest Green Rovers site in **Nailsworth** for 95 houses, but the application was withdrawn. This proposal is linked to the controversial plans for a new stadium at junction 13 of the M5 which we have opposed.

Proposed development of 76 houses on the Winchcombe side of **Prestbury** was dismissed at appeal. Had it been permitted, the development would have destroyed the magnificent view across green fields to Cleeve Common.

- The long-running attempt by Gladman Homes to develop Baxter's Field in the **Slad Valley** finally came to an end in 2017 when the company withdrew from their appeal against refusal of their latest application for 20 houses.

- Proposed development of a doctor's surgery on part of the 'Stow Fair' site at **Stow on the Wold**. The development was refused.

- A new planning application for an extension to **Stowe Hill Quarry** in the Forest of Dean which is also opposed by Natural England and has implications for the county Minerals Local Plan.

- A pair of applications for 5 and for 20 houses on open pasture land surrounded by woods in **Upper Soudley** in the Forest of Dean in an area of high landscape value and offering negligible local benefits. The application was pending decision at the end of the year.

- Two proposed developments within the Cotswolds AONB on the edge of **Winchcombe**. 35 houses on the lower slopes of Langley Hill were dismissed following an appeal; and a 52 bed care home and 53 assisted living units at Almsbury Farm were refused.

- Discussions continued on the A417 "Missing Link" which requires a landscaped design in this highly sensitive location involving the Cotswold's scarp.

In our campaigning, we are guided by a set of Branch Policy Statements which are reviewed regularly and are available on the Branch website.

*The housing development at Farm Lane, Leckhampton is now being built.*



David Bayne

# BRANCH ORGANISATION

**T**HE BRANCH Executive Committee met four times during the year. This committee is responsible for managing the affairs of the Branch and administering its funds and assets and is advised by a Management Sub-Committee and a Policy Sub-Committee, both of which met regularly. A separate Group, including independent judges, administers the CPRE Gloucestershire Rural Excellence Awards scheme.

During the year we were sad to bid farewell to our Branch Chairman, Mike Mackey, who has now returned to his native Scotland. At our AGM in May, Professor Patricia Broadfoot was elected as the new Branch Chair.

Our Branch Officers have remained unchanged: Richard Lloyd and David Brooke, Vice Chairmen; David Bayne, Secretary; Julian Oxley, Treasurer; and Elizabeth Bourne, Membership Secretary.

The Executive Committee also benefits from the membership of our District Chairmen, elected and co-opted members, and representatives of kindred organisations.

We continued to maintain a small office in the heart of Gloucester with Lisa Belfield as our Office Manager and Planning Advisor, who was ably supported by Vanessa Paterson as Branch Administrator. The team has been greatly strengthened during the year by the appointment of Lucy Blyth as our Campaigns and Marketing Manager.

Our CPRE Districts, as ever, have shouldered the burden of our local campaigning, particularly our planning casework. Our thanks go to our District Chairmen and their committees – Prue Vernon, Berkeley Vale; Tom Hancock, Cheltenham,



*The Royal Agricultural University*

Gloucester and Tewkesbury; Clive Osborne, Forest of Dean; Alison Clifton Barnard, North Cotswolds; Nick Dummett, South Cotswolds; a rotating chairman for Stroud District; and Jeremy Lodwick in Tetbury.

Our 2017 AGM was held at the Royal Agricultural University and chaired by our County President, Dame Janet Trotter. The speaker this year was Shaun Spiers, Chief Executive of CPRE nationally who gave his last major address before leaving CPRE to head up the Green Alliance.

The AGM was also the opportunity to present a national long service award to Rosealeen Lane who had served the Branch well over many years.

In furthering the work of the Branch, the Trustees of CPRE Gloucestershire have been guided by the published advice of the Charity Commission.

## COMMUNICATIONS, RECRUITMENT AND OUR PUBLIC PROFILE

**C**OMMUNICATION WITH our members, the public and local decision makers is essential if we are to match our passionately held views with the success of our campaigns. This, in turn, depends on recruiting and engaging supporters, and on raising our profile in the county and beyond. The importance of this activity was reflected in the appointment of Lucy Blyth as our Campaigns and Marketing Manager during the year.

Our work during 2017 has included:

- Support and engagement of existing members. We are developing

electronic communication as a way of supporting many of our members, and as the basis of better two-way discussion and information sharing.

- Recruiting new members and supporters. Our membership includes individuals, families, Parish and Town Councils and other kindred organisations. During the year we welcomed 31 new members but that number was exceeded by a loss of existing members from various causes. This gave us a total membership at the end of 2017 of 1,269 a decline of 5.9% over the year. This decline has been a recurring trend in recent years and we are addressing it with urgency.

- Meeting the public. This is a restricted part of our activity but during the year some of our District Committees took stalls at their local country shows to promote the work of CPRE and recruit new members.

- An attractive and informed website. We are pleased with the use made of the Branch website – [www.cpreglos.org.uk](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk) – which

has become a first point of reference for members, supporters and others who are interested in our views. The site is comprehensive and includes our press releases, newsletters, policy positions and information on the main issues with which we are concerned.

- A focus for our campaigns and communications. We always have strong ideas to promote but their cumulative message is sometimes dispersed by the wide range of their topics and poor communication with the public. In 2017 we developed the idea of 'Love Rural Life' as a 'hook' for all our campaigning work and as a strong common thread that links all we do.

- Our newsletter. Our informative and attractive newsletter, Gloucestershire Views, remains an essential element of our communications under the direction of David Bayne (editor) and Colette Brownrigg (designer). Two editions were circulated to members and others in the spring and autumn, with both printed and web-based versions available.

- A proactive approach to media contacts. Local newspapers, journals, television and radio remain an effective way of promoting our campaigns and messages.



*At the Winchcombe Show*



# WORKING WITH OTHERS

**A**N IMPORTANT part of our campaigning involves partnership working. We continue to benefit from the input of the kindred organisations represented on our Executive Committee. Specific initiatives with these and other organisations have included:

- Developing a research brief with the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils and the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council to review the effectiveness of “made” Neighbourhood Plans in Gloucestershire and other South West counties. The findings will be discussed at a joint workshop in 2018.

- Promoting the “Severn Vision”, a long term vision for the future of the Severn Estuary restored as a healthy functioning ecosystem, providing more benefits for people and retaining and enhancing the unique environment of this special area. Developed by a partnership of environmental organisations, including CPRE, we part-funded an Advocacy Coordinator to promote the principles of the Vision to key audiences.

- Continuing our joint research programme with the University of Gloucestershire, designed to increase understanding of the lower Severn Vale. We are supporting a number of students who have this part of Gloucestershire as their study area. The outcome is a steadily expanding Geographic Information System (GIS) which is progressively providing better evidence to underpin our campaigning.

- Continuing our membership of the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (LNP), which brings together voluntary sector and statutory bodies to inform

strategic environmental priorities in the county. We have agreed to make a small financial contribution to enable the appointment of an LNP manager. A number of the LNP’s activities are directly aligned with Branch priorities.

- Testing the “Building with Nature” benchmarking scheme developed by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the University of the West of England to encourage higher standards of green infrastructure in new developments prior to its launch in November.

We have maintained good internal links and have continued joint work with both CPRE National Office and with CPRE SW. For example:

- Charlie Watson has continued in his role as Vice Chairman of the CPRE County Branch Forum.

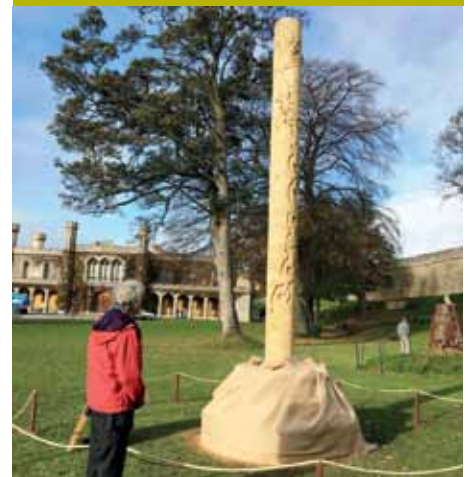
- Richard Lloyd has continued in his role as a member of the CPRE National Policy Committee. He has also continued to represent CPRE nationally on the Professional Steering Group developing the 2017 Charter for Trees, Woods and People which was successfully launched in Lincoln in November.

- We contributed to the development of the “One CPRE” response to the government consultation on a Standard Method of determining Objectively Assessed Housing Need, including taking part in a workshop.

- We contributed to the National Office research on housing pressures in AONBs, including providing detailed information of planning applications and appeals in the Cotswolds and by providing a case study



*Tetbury now has a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan*



*Richard Lloyd admires the Tree Charter Pole at Lincoln*

about housing allocations in the Cotswold Local Plan. The Cotswolds has emerged as the AONB most under pressure from speculative planning applications.

- Our Chairman is our formal representative at meetings of the CPRE SW Regional Group. Richard Lloyd regularly attends their meetings and Bob Brown serves on a Topic Group on Minerals.

- Patricia Broadfoot, Richard Lloyd, David Brooke and Lucy Blyth attended the CPRE Autumn Conference in Birmingham. Crispin Truman, the recently appointed Chief Executive of CPRE, opened the conference with his ‘first impressions’. Of particular interest to the Branch were discussions on fundraising and making ‘One CPRE’ more effective.

- We continue to have good working relations with the Cotswolds Conservation Board and the Wye Valley AONB Partnership.



*The Severn Estuary at Purton looking towards the Forest of Dean*





# OUR AWARDS

**A** RECORD number of ten CPRE Gloucestershire Rural Excellence Awards were made in 2017, which was also the tenth year of our Awards.

The Awards celebrate projects which have brought outstanding benefits to Gloucestershire's environment, people and local communities



Matt Chisnall

## 1. Dursley Tree House

An innovative domestic dwelling built on a difficult wooded sloping site with the principal floor elevated above the ground



Richard Lloyd

## 4. Kingswood Village Allotments

New allotments with raised beds to protect Great Crested Newts, cultivated using organic methods and wildlife friendly products



Richard Lloyd

## 2. Ham Mill Lock Restoration

A Grade II listed canal lock fully restored by Cotswold Canals Trust volunteers demonstrating best conservation practice



Richard Lloyd

## 5. Little Pinnolds Holiday Cottage

A rebuilding of a disused cow shed using Cotswold stone and wood creating a new use and a building that fits well in its setting



Richard Lloyd

## 3. Horsley Play Project

A run down play area transformed into a beautifully designed space with numerous opportunities for recreation and learning



Richard Lloyd

## 6. Minchinhampton RFC Clubhouse

A thoughtfully designed new clubhouse that fits well in the landscape, and has been an outstanding community build effort



Richard Lloyd

## 7. Plusterwine and Alvington Court Saltmarsh Creation Project

A flood defence scheme for the Severn Estuary which has delivered improved protection but also wildlife habitat



Richard Lloyd

## 8. STIHL Treetop Walkway, Westonbirt Arboretum

A stunning treetop walkway, carefully fitted into the landscape provides access to Silk Wood



Richard Lloyd

## 9. Stoke Orchard Community Centre

A new highly energy efficient Community Centre and Shop built to a design conceived by the Parish Council



Lucy Blyth

## 10. "Vegetable Matters" Farm Shop, Ebrington

A purpose built farm shop offering fresh vegetables grown locally which fits well in the landscape and is energy efficient

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

## CPRE Gloucestershire Branch

Summarised Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2017

	2017	2016
<b>Income</b>		
Branch Share of National Subscriptions	22,831	23,404
Interest and Investment Income	5,089	4,928
Donations	400	150
	<u>28,320</u>	<u>28,482</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Contractors Fees	22,566	17,820
Postage & Telephone	566	1,417
Printing & Stationery	836	1,245
Office Rent and Service Charges	3,467	3,467
Insurance	629	1,325
Travel & Meetings	3,282	1,487
Subscriptions	1,125	1,050
Newsletters	3,710	4,003
Public Relations	2,834	2,190
Merchandise	0	2,840
Awards Scheme	965	1,152
Annual Report and AGM	1,664	1,473
Reporting Accountant	880	394
Miscellaneous Expenses	370	1,036
Planning Consultancy	5,954	4,340
Contribution to Head Office Housing Post	5,000	29,167
Solar Panels Project	0	11,515
Severn Vision Project	0	2,000
	<u>53,848</u>	<u>87,921</u>
Deficit for the Year	(25,528)	(59,439)
Gain on Investments	15,883	23,127
General Fund, brought forward	257,624	293,936
General Fund, carried forward	<u>247,979</u>	<u>257,624</u>
<b>Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2017</b>		
<b>Assets</b>		
Investments	293,637	277,754
Debtors	5,647	5,862
Bank Account	49,675	84,665
	<u>348,959</u>	<u>368,281</u>
<b>less Current Liabilities</b>	<u>980</u>	<u>10,657</u>
	<u>347,979</u>	<u>357,624</u>
<b>Financed by</b>		
General Fund	247,979	257,624
Fighting Fund	100,000	100,000
	<u>347,979</u>	<u>357,624</u>

Copies of the full independently examined accounts will be available at the AGM

## Treasurer's Report

WHILE INCOME from subscriptions and investments remained at almost exactly the same level as in the previous year, expenditure fell by £34,000, due very largely to termination of our support for the National Office Housing Project. A large part of the resulting deficit of £25,000 was covered by the increase of nearly £16,000 in the value of our investments, resulting in an overall depletion of our funds of just under £10,000.

*Julian Oxley*  
Hon Treasurer



Gloucestershire  
Campaign to Protect Rural England

## CPRE GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH TRUSTEES

**T**HE TRUSTEES of the Branch are the Branch Officers, Elected Members of the Executive Committee and CPRE District Chairmen. CPRE Stroud District currently has a rota of short-term chairmen and thus de facto is not represented by a Trustee.

**Mr Mike Mackey**  
*Chairman (to May 2017)*  
**Professor Patricia Broadfoot**  
*Chairman (from May 2017)*  
**Mr David Bayne**  
**Mrs Elizabeth Bourne**  
**Mr David Brooke**  
**Ms Alison Clifton Barnard**  
**Mr Nick Dummett**  
**Major Tom Hancock**

**Mr Nick Holliday**  
**Mrs Rosealeen Lane**  
*(to May 2017)*  
**Mr Richard Lloyd**  
**Mr Jeremy Lodwick**  
**Mr Clive Osborne**  
**Mr Julian Oxley**  
**Mrs Prue Vernon**  
**Mr Charlie Watson**

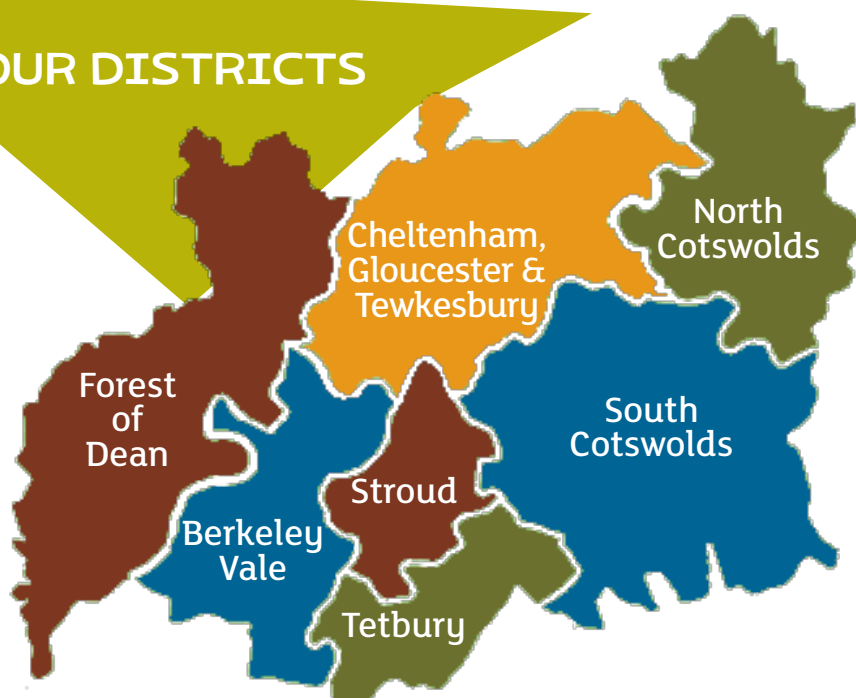
**T**HE GLOUCESTERSHIRE Branch of CPRE promotes and encourages, for the benefit of the public, the improvement and protection of the Gloucestershire countryside and its towns and villages, and the better development of the rural environment. It acts upon any matters affecting the planning, improvement and protection of the countryside and landscape.

[www.cpreglos.org.uk](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk)

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Community House  
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Charity number: 248577

## OUR DISTRICTS



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