

Climate Change and the Countryside

CPRE believes that the single biggest threat facing the countryside is climate change. We are campaigning for rural areas to be safe from its effects, as well as on how rural solutions can stop it in its tracks. There is much that candidate can do locally; from halting carbon-emitting industries like fracking and transitioning to a zero-carbon energy mix instead, to decarbonising the farming sector, and committing to energy efficient homes..

Drastic measures are needed to tackle climate change so we can ensure future generations can live, work and enjoy the English countryside as we do today.

We call on candidates to do all they can to tackle climate change at a local level.

- **Develop and implement a local authority strategy for climate change adaptation and mitigation.**
- **Embed climate change considerations into policy making on all issues, leading from the front by installing renewable energy infrastructure on council buildings.**
- **Promote sustainable industries to prepare for long-term resilience to climate change.**



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About us

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) campaigns for a beautiful and thriving countryside that enriches all our lives. The countryside is unique, essential and precious, but is all too often placed under threat. CPRE works to promote, enhance and protect the countryside to make it a better place to live, work and enjoy; ensuring it flourishes now and for future generations.

Through a network of 43 local groups, 8 regional groups and a national charity we work locally and nationally to stand up for our countryside.

JOIN US

IN STANDING UP
FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE

www.cpre.org.uk



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
Standing up for your countryside

Stand up for our local countryside

A manifesto for the 2019 local and mayoral elections



The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) campaigns for a beautiful and thriving countryside that enriches all our lives.

We want to see a countryside that is accessible to all, where the voices of residents are heard in decision-making and the needs of communities are met. CPRE believes that people have the right to enjoy a countryside that promotes a healthier economy and a happier community, and we have the ambition to make it happen.

Thriving and empowered rural communities

We all have a right to a home we can afford to live in, wherever we are. However, across our countryside, bus drivers, teachers and nurses – those people we need to keep rural areas running – are too often priced out and are missing this opportunity. **National housing policies should prioritise meeting genuine community need and investment in the future of rural communities,** rather than pursuing unrealistic housing targets based on market demand and economic growth.



Local democracy is crucial to a happy and healthy society. As one of the only channels through which local people can have a say on what happens in their local area, the planning system is a vital means to empower communities, and should be strengthened, but it is too often undermined. **Proposals such as those that aim to weaken rules to allow fracking to be 'fast-tracked' through the planning system are an assault on local democracy,** and should be opposed.

In order to empower and unite communities, we are calling on candidates to:

- **Prioritise meeting local housing need over market demand,** focusing on the required tenure and location of housing.
- **Get the local council building more homes for social rent,** using all tools at their disposal.
- **Pro-actively pursue the use of the Rural Exception Sites policy** to enable the building of affordable homes where they could not otherwise be built.
- **Champion local aspirations** by supporting communities to make neighbourhood plans, and uphold the policies of those plans in decisions on planning applications.
- **Support the integrity of the planning system to ensure local people's voices can be heard,** opposing any attempts from government to weaken or undermine it.

Best use of land

We can and must **design new development and build homes that meet people's everyday needs, but without wasting green land needlessly** – keeping people and the environment in mind.



Brownfield registers show that there is enough brownfield land for over 1 million homes across 18,000 sites and that suitable sites are continuing to come forward. Let's maximise this resource first, before building on new countryside sites.

By using land well we can give our towns and cities room to breathe, see infrastructure and services close to where we live, and enable access to the countryside next door to communities - allowing people to lead happy, well-connected and good quality lives.

A beautiful, enjoyable and accessible countryside

From an essential place for health and wellbeing, to sites of recreation and exploration, **the benefits of our countryside are endless.**



However, all too often its beauty, diversity and tranquillity is depleted or out of reach. Littered bottles and cans are found across our green hills, and sights of our magical starry nights are rare. However, with your support we can see this beauty once more and open up an inclusive and accessible countryside for all.

We are calling on candidates to recognise the value of nature and all it brings by committing to:

- **Respect the constraints of protected and designated areas** such as Green Belt, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - preserving them for current and future generations to enjoy.
- **Ensure the regeneration of urban areas** by identifying suitable sites in local plans and brownfield registers, focusing on suitable brownfield sites first and unblocking barriers to their development.
- **Commit to ambitious sustainable and public transport solutions** at an early stage of infrastructure planning, shifting away from building any more roads.

- **Develop light pollution policies in local plans,** which will ensure that existing dark skies are protected, and that new developments do not increase local light pollution.
- **Support an ambitious deposit return system** that minimises the cost of kerbside collections for councils, while supporting individuals to see a litter free future for our green spaces.
- Encourage the introduction of **local outreach and engagement programmes** to provide equal opportunities for access to National Parks, AONBs and the countryside next door.
- **Put in place sustainable food procurement policies** for local authority catering, supporting local economies and farmers by sourcing food locally.