

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE VIEWS

## Hedgerow heroes

Celebrating the humble hedge

Truckstop teamwork  
Campaigning for the Cotswolds

Capturing our countryside  
Get involved in our photography  
competition for 2024!

Exploring Gloucestershire's  
stone stiles  
Discover your local heritage



The countryside charity  
Gloucestershire

2024

# Greetings from the Chair



Time never stands still does it? As with life, so too with CPRE, change is our watchword as we constantly strive to keep pace with new challenges and respond to new opportunities.

At national level, CPRE colleagues under the leadership of new Chief Executive, Roger Morlock – formerly of the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust - are working hard to respond to changes in Government policy and to influence the political parties to think about the needs of the countryside as they begin to put together their general election manifestos.

Last autumn saw the publication of CPRE's hard-hitting report on the desperate state of rural homelessness '*unravelling a crisis: the state of rural affordable housing*' which was launched at a reception in the House of Lords. Work continues on the vital effort of protecting the Green Belt, promoting the importance of roof-top solar instead of using up valuable agricultural land, rural

transport and crucially, the value of hedgerows. The passing of the *Levelling up and Regeneration Bill* in November which has many implications for planning, has been significantly influenced by the sustained efforts of CPRE colleagues. There is lots more detail on the National CPRE website – do have a look if you haven't recently.

Here at CPRE Gloucestershire, we also welcome the opportunities that change brings. Social media of all kinds enables us to keep you, our members, up to date with our local campaigns. I especially welcome our new style CPRE Gloucestershire newsletter. I hope you find it informative and a good read. Do let us know what you think. More generally, I look forward to seeing many of you at our forthcoming events – please check our website ([www.cpreglos.org.uk](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk)) for details and for information about all our other activities.

Meanwhile, thank you for being a member of CPRE Gloucestershire – your support means everything to us – quite literally!

*Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE FAcSS, Chair*

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The countryside charity  
Gloucestershire

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# Truckstop teamwork

At CPRE Gloucestershire, we rely on the support of our volunteers and members to work together to protect our cherished Gloucestershire countryside.

The proposed truckstop development near Cirencester is a case that embodies the power of this support; our work contributed to the refusal of a planned major truckstop development in the protected Cotswold National Landscape. This case holds specific importance as it set a precedent for wider planning policy throughout the country.

When CARG (Cotswold AONB Resident Group) alerted us to the proposed truckstop development, a skilled team of CPRE volunteers brought their expertise to support them in this important campaign.

This proposal from a transportation company covered a significant area of tarmac for 75 trucks and 15 cars in open farmland in an area just north of Cirencester. Cotswold District Council had refused the original application, flagging several threats to our National Landscape including going against national and local planning policy. Significantly, the potential for alternative locations for this development that would

not compromise our countryside were proposed. It was clear that this was a vital case to support as it personified our key mission for the right development in the right places.



Photo credit: Michael St John

After a wide call to action to CPRE Gloucestershire members, we were delighted to donate £9,000 to CARG's £40,000 target. Your donations made a substantial contribution to securing a specialist barrister to represent CARG in the case when it moved to appeal in January 2023.

We are delighted to report that the truckstop application has now been dismissed on appeal. Our grateful thanks to all our CPRE Gloucestershire supporters who donated to the fight, and special appreciation to our team of volunteers and CARG for their planning and countryside expertise.

*You may be interested to read the full report from the Inspector, which is online on Cotswold District Council's planning portal.*



Photo credit: Michael St John





# Hedgerow heroes

## Restoring our crucial hedgerow networks throughout the county

The first examples of managed hedgerows date back to the Bronze Age; they were used as a source of firewood, for shelter from rain and wind and to fence livestock. Since then, they have been used to mark ownership boundaries and create natural borders. In today's fast paced world, they are used to hide large housing developments and buffer noise pollution from roads and train tracks.

But they are so much more than this. **Hedgerows are the UK's largest priority habitat.** They support up to 80% of our woodland birds. Not only that; they also sustain over 2000 UK wildlife species by either providing shelter, food or ways to move throughout the countryside. It isn't only wildlife that benefits from a healthy Hedgerow population, their role in the **climate emergency** is crucial. Not only do they prevent soil loss, reduce pollution, reduce flooding and regulate water supply, but they also have a major role in reducing greenhouse gases by storing large amounts of carbon. **Every kilometre of hedgerow has the capacity to store 600 to 900 kg of carbon dioxide per year for up to 20 years!**

**Did you know**, that with agricultural intensification and the urbanization of our natural spaces, **we have lost around 118,000 miles of healthy hedgerows since 1950?** This is around **50% of UK hedgerow cover.** With such dramatic decline, our important wildlife species such as horseshoe bats, bumblebees, and many butterfly and bird species, have suffered and declined in number.



## So why have our hedgerows declined so much?

Hedgerow loss accelerated after World War 2. The traditional practice of laying and coppicing shifted to 'flailing' where the hedge is flailed (cut) to the same height year after year. Added to this, the increasing pressures to intensify farming saw thousands of miles of hedgerows ripped out. The flailed hedges that remained became gapped, and eventually grew into lines of trees offering less shelter, food and protection from the elements. With the loss of hedgerow, we have lost so much more: The flowers, cover and larval foodplants for pollinators and other insects, nesting spots for farmland birds and hide holes for smaller mammals have all disappeared.

## Boosting biodiversity

Healthy Hedgerows are made up of a range of different plant species at different heights along them to successfully support a mix of wildlife. Take the yellowhammers and linnets who prefers hedgerows under 2m whereas the song thrushes and turtle doves prefer hedgerows over 4m. A well-managed, healthy hedgerow will support large populations of invertebrates, provide habitats to birds and mammals and give a rich supply of food throughout the year.

To ensure the hedge remains in peak health, instead of annually flailing, it should be trimmed on a minimum of a three-year rotation. This increases the hedge fruit and promotes healthy growth with 40% more flowers and fruits than if cut annually! Hedges should ideally be at least 2m high.



## CPRE has a rich history with hedgerows

Across the country, CPRE has been restoring local landscapes through the 'Hedgerow Heroes Project.' The campaign to restore the country's hedgerows is nothing new; it was in CPRE's founding manifesto in 1926 that the "indiscriminate destruction" of hedgerows was first warned against. In Gloucestershire, we joined a national project in 2008 working on a surveying and mapping project thanks to a generous landscape legacy. We then embarked on our first Hedgerow Heroes project in 2023, which is due to finish this spring.



## Hedgerow heroes in Gloucestershire

We will plant and restore at least 1km of hedgerow across the county by the end of May. So far, we have laid 250m of hedgerow. We have enough plants for to be able to plant more...and hope to do so!

Since October, we have run 7 practical hedge laying sessions with 5 more to come! Each session works with volunteers ranging in age from 15 to 75!

Our project is being run in partnership with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West, and has seen us work with a variety of community groups including schools, urban demographics, corporations and a range of voluntary organisations too. We are committed to empowering local communities in their natural spaces and helping them to engage in a practical and proactive way.

**If you're interested in joining us and volunteering, please contact Millie, our Hedgerow Heroes Project Officer, at [admin@cpreglos.org.uk](mailto:admin@cpreglos.org.uk)**

We were delighted to be joined by students and staff from the Cotswold School in November. And they had a great time with us too! *"I loved being outside of a classroom and being able to do something practical with my time that will make a real difference"*  
- Student, 14.

We set up a training scheme for some of the students, using a professional hedge layer and a juvenile hedge within the local area offering the students hedge laying sessions. *"The practical days have shown me that there are other career routes I would be interested in seeing. The countryside is a big part of our local area and to be able to learn skills within it is amazing"*  
- Student, 15.

Staff appreciated the course and inspired us to seek out opportunities to work more with schools in the future: *"Being able to diversify the students' learning opportunities was amazing, having them be able to see something physical that they have done themselves is key to learning. They really enjoyed being outside and participating in the management of such a key habitat. Because of their enthusiasm I hope that this has inspired them and that they continue to pursue opportunities like these"* - Scott Powels, Teacher.

Before this project ends, we are hoping to work with another school and engage with both primary and secondary students to help plant the hedges. The legacy of the project rest on the students taking pride and having a deep connection with the natural spaces around them. Something we're keen to start through our work. By giving local young people the opportunity to improve their natural environment and gain real life skills, we hope to empower the students to explore opportunities within the countryside workforce in years to come.

## What's next?

We've started and we don't want to stop! We plan to launch another project later this year, creating a further 1km of new hedgerow and 500m of hedgerow restoration. We're particularly keen to work with more schools across the county in this next phase.

**You can help us deliver this project in Gloucestershire; donations are kindly welcomed.**

Please visit [www.cpreglos.org.uk](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk) or contact us at [info@cpreglos.org.uk](mailto:info@cpreglos.org.uk) to donate to our hedgerow project.



# Events

Looking back at 2023, we were thrilled to meet so many committed CPRE Gloucestershire supporters at our events throughout the year.

We were delighted to offer a wide variety of events, from the Christmas Carol Concert to our guided tour of Elmore Court and their fantastic treehouses in the rewilding project. Events are a great way for us to connect with you, our members; to thank you for your support and to provide crucial funds for our work!

2024 is going to be another busy year for us. We'll be in touch soon to share our Events Calendar for the year. Look out for our Countryside Day in September preceded by at least one summer event featuring Gloucestershire's Cadenza Choir.....and so much more!



## Are you a website wizard?

### Volunteer with us!

Fancy getting more involved with the office side of CPRE Gloucestershire? We are currently looking for a volunteer to help us with our website!

Do you have experience of building and maintaining WordPress websites? Do you want to share and develop your skills whilst supporting a local charity?

If you do and would be interested in helping our Communications Team on this project, please get in touch!

We are looking to refresh our website content with a spring clean project starting towards the end of March. The role involves working remotely with project meetings either face to face or on Microsoft Teams with our Communications Team. The role is a fantastic way to share your skills, develop your experience and meet new people through our wide CPRE network. It's also a great way of giving something back.

Whether you can donate a few hours a month or a more permanent role, please get in touch!

Email [info@cpreglos.org.uk](mailto:info@cpreglos.org.uk) to register your interest.



# Is your council a member of CPRE?

Did you know that 41 of our 264 Parish and Town Councils in Gloucestershire are members of CPRE Gloucestershire? We have a shared interest in promoting vibrant, rural communities and ensuring that new development is appropriate and well planned while protecting and enhancing the rural landscape and biodiversity.

There are many benefits of CPRE membership including...

- Expert support in responding to significant planning applications
- Discounted rates to our training seminars
- Expert support in responding to consultations on new and revised local plan policies
- Access to our resources such as position statements, on a variety of issues

Find out more about Parish and Town council membership by visiting [www.cpreglos.org.uk/parish-and-town-councils](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk/parish-and-town-councils) or by emailing [info@cpreglos.org.uk](mailto:info@cpreglos.org.uk)

## Member spotlight: Andrew Tabor

We are a rural county; almost ¾ of the land is farmed with over 3,000 commercial farm holdings. Farmers are the main stewards of rural land and central to how the countryside looks, is managed and functions. Their role in securing our food supply, restoring nature and stabilising the climate in the countryside is vital. We count many of the county's farmers amongst our members, with a shared desire to protect Gloucestershire's rural landscapes.

One such member is Andrew Tabor. Andrew, who lives in Compton Abdale, says: *"I have been a member of CPRE Gloucestershire for about 18 years, joining shortly after I took over running the farm from my father 20 years ago this year"*.

In 2001, Andrew moved to the North Cotswolds following a 20-year career in the Army. Since settling here, he has been and remains heavily involved in several of Gloucestershire's charitable organisations and volunteer groups. He was the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire in 2017/18, President of the Gloucestershire Society in 2021 and is the current Warden of the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire as well as a serving Magistrate.

But is it in farming that Andrew spends much of his time. He entered the farm in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and subsequently the Higher-Level Environmental Stewardship Scheme with an emphasis on encouraging birds through the planting of floristically enhanced grass margins, pollen and nectar plots and the feeding of birds over the winter months to fill "the hunger gap." *"I'm glad to say this has resulted in the rapid growth of the wild bird population, including yellow*

*hammers, skylarks and corn buntings."*

This work continues today and has visibly improved the biodiversity of the 900-acre site.

Whilst serving as High Sheriff in 2017, Andrew was inspired by meeting volunteers from a huge number of groups and charities across the county. He remembers fondly attending a joint CPRE Gloucestershire and Cotswold Canals Connected event at Pockett's Orchard near Whitminster in 2021. Our previous President, Charles Martell spoke at the event about rare varieties of apples and pears in Gloucestershire. Andrew is looking forward to hearing about CPRE Gloucestershire member events planned for this year.

Looking ahead to the next 20 years, Andrew cites employment as a critical factor for the county: *"Gloucestershire needs employment for young people. The population is getting older, and it is crucial for the prosperity of rural and urban areas alike that there are employment opportunities for young people so we can not only keep young people here but attract young people into the county."*



# Capturing our Countryside: A Rural View

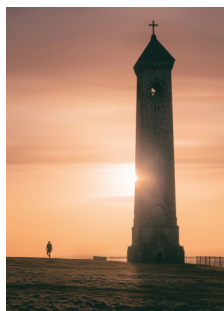
To celebrate Gloucestershire's countryside, we are delighted to launch our Photography Competition for 2024. We are looking for photographs that highlight the natural beauty and diversity of our treasured landscapes.

It's up to you how you interpret our theme, "A Rural View"; your photo could show farmland, wildlife, close-up images of the beauty in nature or perhaps people enjoying or working in the countryside.

Looking for inspiration? Here are some examples of the kinds of images we'd love to see taken from our previous photography competitions.

There are two categories for entry...

- Under 18s - for the budding enthusiast!
- Over 18s - for the more experienced photographer



James Kelly-Smith  
Tyndale Monument, North Nibley



Andy Hill - Medieval clapper bridge in Eastleach

Each category has a cash prize of £100 to the winner.  
Closing date for entries: 31st August 2024

Competition entry is FREE, and you may enter up to 3 photographs.

Please email photos as attachments to [info@cpreglos.org.uk](mailto:info@cpreglos.org.uk) together with the following information:

Photographer's name

Category

(if under 18, please state photographer's age and date of birth)

Address

Email address

Telephone number

Location of photo

Date photo taken

Name of photograph or caption

(of no more than 25 words)

## Unravelling a crisis A CPRE report into Rural Affordable Housing

Rural Gloucestershire, as with many other parts of rural England, has an increasing housing affordability problem. People in housing need in rural areas face stagnating wages and rising housing costs and find themselves at the acute end of the crisis. Evermore second homes and short-term holiday lets are putting further pressure on an already overheated housing market. A perfect storm leading to people leaving the communities they love to seek cheaper accommodation elsewhere; draining skills, economic activity and undermining the provision of vital public services.





## Competition Rules

1. Please take photos responsibly and always follow the Countryside Code.
2. If entering the under 18 category, your 18th birthday must be after the closing date. Please state your age and date of birth when submitting your entry
3. Photographs should be recent; taken within 24 months of the competition closing date (no photos taken before 31st August 2022).
4. Photographs must be taken within the county of Gloucestershire.
5. You do not have to live in Gloucestershire to enter.
6. We can only accept digital images.
7. Images should be in 'jpeg' format and have a minimum file size of 1Mb, and a maximum of 10Mb.
8. CPRE Gloucestershire will not accept any responsibility for lost or damaged entries.
9. Photographers will retain copyright for their work, however, CPRE Gloucestershire and CPRE will maintain the right to exhibit and use images in print and online for purposes of promoting their charitable work; photographers will be accredited at all times.
10. This competition is only open to amateur photographers. For the purposes of this competition, we define amateur as a person who earns less than 50% of their annual income through sales of their photography.
11. Entrants must have obtained permission of any people featured in the entries (or their parents/guardians if children under 16 are featured) – on the understanding that the image can be used in accordance with point number 9 in these rules of entry.
12. The closing date for the competition is 31st August 2024. Entries must reach us by midnight on that day.
13. Our favourite entries will be displayed on our website [www.cpreglos.org.uk](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk) and used in our social media posts.
14. The winners will be blind judged by a panel of CPRE Gloucestershire trustees and staff.
15. The two £100 prizes (one in each category) will be awarded at CPRE Gloucestershire's Annual Award Ceremony. If the winner cannot attend in person, we will arrange for the prize to be sent by post or BACs.
16. If a winner is unable to be contacted after reasonable attempts have been made, CPRE Gloucestershire reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner-up or re-offer the prize to any future competition.
17. Submission of a photograph for the competition is taken as an agreement to these rules.

If you have any questions, please contact the team on [info@cpreglos.org.uk](mailto:info@cpreglos.org.uk).

We look forward to seeing your images capturing the Gloucestershire countryside!

The CPRE report highlights issues affecting the supply of rural affordable housing. They include:

- 'Affordable housing' today is defined as being 80% of the local market value and 'affordable rent' at least 20% below local market rents, but this is still unaffordable for many.
- As many as half of all Parish Councils in rural England are not covered by regulations preventing resale of affordable housing units at market prices or as second homes, leading to further loss of housing stock for rent.
- Most affordable housing in new developments is secured through agreements with developers who frequently renegotiate downwards arguing they cannot deliver the number of affordable homes specified.

Recommendations to government include:

- **Redefining the term 'affordable housing'** so that the cost is directly linked to average local incomes.
- Increasing minimum requirements for affordable housing, with **specific targets for social rented homes**.

- Promoting greater use of **Neighbourhood Plans and Rural Exception Sites** to deliver small scale affordable housing on the edge of villages in line with locally assessed need.
- Making **more funding** available to build more social rented housing.
- Supporting **community-led development** where it meets a local need.
- Supporting local planning authorities and the Planning Inspectorate when they **reject poorly designed developments**.
- Introducing a **second home and short term lets register**, with planning controls to regulate the provision of short term lets and powers to levy extra council tax on second homes.

Visit our website to read the report in full:  
[www.cpreglos.org.uk/news/rural-housing-report](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk/news/rural-housing-report)



# District voices

Volunteers are at the heart of all we do at CPRE Gloucestershire. We are fortunate to count on a group of highly skilled volunteers across the county working in our 6 Districts; Berkeley Vale, Cheltenham, Gloucester & Tewkesbury, Forest of Dean, North Cotswolds, South Cotswolds & Tetbury, and Stroud. These volunteers are at the coalface of all our planning work and their expertise is highly valued within the CPRE family.

## A day in the life of a CPRE District Committee

### The Local Plan

Decisions on planning applications by local authorities are guided by a statutory development plan and national planning guidance issued by the Government. Districts try to influence the content of Local Plans and associated documents when they are being reviewed or replaced. That involves responding to formal public consultations by the planning authority and, where justified, arguing CPRE's case when the draft Plan is subject to examination by a planning inspector. It may also include submitting views informally when there is an opportunity to influence events by offering comment or providing specific information relevant to CPRE's arguments.

### Planning applications

Districts also make representations on planning applications in cases where CPRE wishes to influence the outcome. Often that will be making the case for refusal of the application, but it may in some cases comprise support for the proposals or comments which stop short of outright objection. The District may continue to fight its case where the planning authority refuses the application and there is an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

### Teamwork

Not all CPRE Gloucestershire Districts coincide with planning authority boundaries and there is a need for strong liaison between Districts to ensure that CPRE submissions are consistent as well as sound in land use planning terms.

Minerals and Waste Plans and associated planning applications are the responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council. Representations on those are often dealt with at CPRE County level rather than by the District; especially if the issues affect more than one District.

### Working with members

We do sometimes receive requests from members of the public, including from CPRE members, to support them in objecting to a planning application. We are proud of our reputation for objectivity and soundness in land use planning. We can and will only offer support where it is compatible with our own evaluation and justifies use of our limited resources.

Submitting land use planning representations can require a substantial input of time, not just in preparing our input, but also in assessing large volumes of documentation submitted by others. We are fortunate that our District Committees are made up of volunteers with a good degree of background knowledge and expertise to ensure that our views are taken seriously by planning authorities and, where relevant, by a planning inspector.



## Upcoming District events

- Stroud District: A guided walk through an ancient beech wood at Cranham Wood, taking in bluebells, a prehistoric tump, the Painswick stream and finishing with a visit to an eco-house (Saturday 11th May)
- Berkeley Vale District: Frampton Country Fair (Sunday 8th September)

## Join us!

Are you passionate about protecting the countryside in your area? Each of our districts across the county is looking for new members to join their committee. Meeting every 2-3 months, roles include planning, events and membership recruitment. To register your interest and find out more about the range of roles, please email us at [info@cpreglos.org.uk](mailto:info@cpreglos.org.uk)



## Snapshot of 2023

- 30 planning representations from across the Districts
- 17 out of total 30 planning representations contributed to a refusal.
- Taking part in the Stroud Examination in Public (EiP)
- Results of the Stroud District Council Local Plan
- Mid-term review of the Local Plan by Cotswold District Council

## What's on our mind for 2024?

Alongside our usual District operations, our District committees are keeping a close eye on a number of specific concerns for this year. These include...

- Increasing threat to the Cotswold National Landscape from developers in Stroud District Council
- Results of the inspection of Stroud District Council Local Plan
- The mid-term review of a local plans by Cotswold District Council
- Concern over a lack of up-to-date local plans resulting in speculative planning applications being permitted
- Forest of Dean Council Local Plan review
- Joint Core Strategy issues involving Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City and Tewkesbury Borough planning authorities.

## Want to know more about our District Committees?

Find out more! Watch interviews from District committee members in our 'Gloucestershire Country Matters' series on our YouTube channel.





# Juniper Hill Field campaign

Madeleine Bunting, CPRE Gloucestershire

Until last summer, only a few walkers knew of the twenty acres known as Juniper Hill Field which saddles the escarpment between the Slad and Painswick valleys. It is an expanse of calcareous grassland, rich with wild flowers in summer, and a breeding ground for skylarks which can be heard, singing high up in the air above their nesting sites. It's a place which provokes fierce attachment in local residents, in part because of the exhilarating sense of expansiveness which greets you after climbing up the steep wooded escarpment. For those living in the deep Cotswold valleys around Stroud, the much loved counterpoint is the wide open grass commons. Rodborough, Selsley and Minchinhampton commons are well known, and Sheepscombe and Cranham commons are also much loved, but Juniper Hill Field has been something of a local secret until it came under threat and the Save Juniper Hill Field campaign was launched last spring.

After the war, the Field was ploughed up and the thin nutrient soils were enriched with fertiliser to grow arable crops, but as government policy in the late nineties shifted, incentives were in place to set aside such poor quality agricultural land. By the 2000s, further policy shifts in favour of nature conservation led to a grant to fence Juniper Hill Field and put in water so that cattle could be brought back onto the field to graze



and thus began a successful restoration project which over the last fifteen years has seen a proliferation of wild flowers including five types of orchid as well as the skylarks. Hundreds of bee orchids are now flourishing on the south facing slope at one end of the field.

For those who have walked and loved the field for a long time, it has been a very heartening tale of how nature can be restored. Forty per cent of the Cotswolds used to be covered with this kind of open calcareous grassland and now only a tiny proportion remains – just 1.4%. Two local residents, both in the late eighties, have been witness to this wonderful revival of the Field; Joy and Hanny live in the adjoining valleys of Slad and Painswick and for over forty years, they have walked the field regularly and struck up a friendship over their shared love of this remarkable place. Last June, Joy took me up on her usual route to show me the range of orchids and other wildflowers. Her knowledge of the field was so intimate so that she could talk of where and when she had seen particular flowers over the decades of walking the field.

A large part of why the nature restoration project of the 2000s has proved so successful is that the Field is bordered by two Sites of Special Scientific Interest: on one side, Juniper Hill is managed by Natural England, while Frith Wood, owned by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust wraps around three sides. This is what makes conserving the Field for nature so important. It links up the SSSIs and provides the vital wildlife corridor which nature conservation policy rightly emphasises as critical to the UK's targets for nature recovery. If reserves are isolated, then their populations of wildlife are vulnerable to sudden collapse as our climate becomes more erratic. Juniper Hill Field is the crucial link in a sequence of reserves which stretch from the outskirts of Stroud up to Cranham and beyond, a stunning ten miles or so of Cotswold escarpment with its distinctive mosaic of beechwood, grassland and deep valleys.

But all this was put at risk when the Field was sold three years ago to the national company Woodlands.co.uk. Their business model is to buy land and split it up into small plots to sell on. They build the access tracks and market the plots as an opportunity for hobby conservationists or just city dwellers keen on a bit of outdoor space,



# aign re President

perhaps to park a campervan or build a cabin for leisure use. They have been in business several decades and can point to examples of how owners have managed the woodland well, but there are other examples where hidden pockets of woodland which were previously undisturbed now have the regular comings and goings of owners and their vehicles visiting cabins and yurts.

In principle, the idea of more people having a hands on experience of conservation and woodland management is unobjectionable and the desire for people to have more space and an opportunity to spend more time closer to the natural world is understandable. But in Juniper Hill Field, the fences which now criss cross the grassland provide the perfect vantage point for birds of prey; they are likely to deter the skylarks. As one of the birds on the red list as endangered after catastrophic falls in population since the seventies, this feels tragic: one more site which is not safe. It is no longer possible to graze the Field and the departure of the cattle will affect the vegetation; the significant detail is that the way they eat - their tongues wrapping around clumps - ensures the wildflowers can get purchase amongst the tougher grasses. The cattle's dung also encourages the invertebrates on which the many birds feed. Calcareous grassland requires a very specific type of light grazing.

A group of residents have now been campaigning for nearly nine months to raise awareness of the importance of the Field and its precious habitat. They have collected over a thousand signatures on a petition asking for Woodlands.co.uk to enter a dialogue about how the Field can best be saved. Last October, more than 70 joined an impromptu picnic on the brow of hill where there is a stunning view down over the Painswick valley past Coaley Peak to the Severn bridges. Award winning actor and local resident Josh O'Connor threw his weight behind the campaign as a patron as did the retail guru and broadcaster Mary Portas; there has been coverage in national and local media.



Meanwhile, Natural England has offered to buy the entire 20 acre Field from Woodlands.co.uk but so far the two parties have been unable to agree a deal. The campaign's objective is that one day the Field will end up with Natural England as a nature reserve and the skylarks will be safe for another generation.

CPRE Gloucestershire supports the Save Juniper Hill Field campaign. For more information, please visit [www.cpreglos.org.uk/juniper-hill](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk/juniper-hill) or [www.savejuniperhillfield.co.uk](http://www.savejuniperhillfield.co.uk)

# CPRE Gloucestershire Awards

Nominations open for 2024!



A real highlight of our year is the CPRE Gloucestershire Awards in November, and we know this year will be no exception! The awards celebrate outstanding projects across the county that have contributed to the quality of the county's environment and the life of its communities.

**Do you know of any recently completed projects where you are? Why not nominate them for a CPRE Gloucestershire Award?**

Now in its 17th year, a total of ninety-five local initiatives have been presented with a CPRE Gloucestershire Award: from farm shops and community projects to wildlife reintroduction and affordable housing. **This year should see us reach our 100th award!**

Spearheaded by our Vice Chair, Richard Lloyd MBE, the CPRE Gloucestershire Awards were launched in 2007 to recognise projects which demonstrate sustainability and result in significant improvements to the environment and facilities for their communities.

All projects are assessed against a set list of criteria with all awarded projects meeting the standards set by a panel of judges:

- Demonstrate innovation and sustainable best practice
- Improve the quality of the built or natural environment
- Help enrich local communities
- Help mitigate climate change
- Be viewable from public places

The judges are delighted to have been able to present awards to a truly diverse list of projects over the last 16 years. Past award recipients include community shops, village halls, nature recovery projects, community orchards, affordable housing schemes and built heritage projects. A full list of all previous awards can be seen on our website.

Nominations are welcomed from any source; we just ask that you have the project owner's approval before submission.

For nomination forms, a view of previous awards and further information, please visit: [www.cpreglos.org.uk/awards](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk/awards).

**Loxley**

[www.loxleylegal.com](http://www.loxleylegal.com)

We are so pleased to announce that our awards this year are once again to be sponsored by Loxley Solicitors.

*"Loxley Solicitors are specialist agricultural solicitors providing advice across England and Wales. We advise on all aspects of property law, with a particular expertise in rural land and agricultural businesses. We deal with the buying and selling of farms, land, cottages and country homes as well as advising on farming partnerships, wills and probate, land and property disputes, sporting rights, agricultural tenancies and planning and development work."*

*"We are delighted to be supporting CPRE Gloucestershire again this year. The charity celebrates innovative and sustainable projects across our county, and we are proud to be supporting them."*

*"CPRE Gloucestershire have recognised the achievements of so many worthwhile causes within our community and we look forward to seeing who is recognised for their ambitious projects this year."*

## Meet our judges

Projects nominated for a CPRE Gloucestershire Award are judged by an independent, expert panel who meet regularly throughout the year to discuss new submissions. The panel comprises six judges. They are:

- Richard Lloyd (Chair)
- Anna Ball
- David Ball
- Kim Bedford
- Bill Cronin
- Jaqui Taylor

Between them, the judges have wide expertise and long experience in the built environment and design issues; in landscape, biodiversity and countryside management; and in working with rural communities.

Our Awards scheme has been running for over 15 years. Do you recognise any of the projects from past years?



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## Hartpury Orchard Centre (2009 recipient)

The Hartpury Orchard Centre hosted our Forest of Dean summer meeting last year. The Orchard Centre has a traditionally constructed oak-framed building incorporating renewable energy technology, rainwater harvesting and reedbed grey water treatment. It made for a fantastic venue to celebrate the work of our Forest of Dean District Committee whilst learning more about Gloucestershire's orchards.



timber cladding, and topped with a green roof, the venue is designed to prevent noise disturbance.

'Rewild Things' is a rewilding project taking place in a tract of farmland on the Elmore Court Estate. The project consists of six contemporary and highly energy efficient treehouses overlooking the rewilding environment from the canopy edge of woodland. Guests will feel fully immersed in the natural environment. The rewilding makes a valuable contribution to nature recovery, whilst also contributing to the viability of the estate through the innovative tree houses.

## Elmore Court Estate: The Gillyflower (2014 recipient) and Rewild Things (2023 recipient)

Two projects at the Elmore Court Estate have received CPRE Gloucestershire Awards over the years for their environmental efforts. Elmore Court kindly hosted CPRE Gloucestershire and our supporters at our guided event last year. We had the chance to view both awarded projects; the Gillyflower and Rewild Things, and view first hand their truly innovative features.

The Gillyflower is a state-of-the-art events venue, complementing the historic character of the Court. Constructed from rammed earth, with triple glazing and



## The Nest

(2023 recipient)

Did you attend our Orchard Restoration sessions or our Wassail event, in collaboration with the Ernest Cook Trust, in Halmore near Slimbridge? You may have noticed an outstanding sculpture in the Slimbridge area on your travels!



'The Nest' is a splendid sculpture on the A38 roundabout and a 2023 CPRE Gloucestershire Award recipient. The sculpture is a permanent reminder of the wealth of wildlife at Slimbridge's Wildfowl and Wetlands Centre and in the Severn Estuary, and its need for conservation. Ideas were submitted by Slimbridge Primary School after a competition and implemented by award-winning metal sculptor, Ian Gill.

View a cumulative list of all previous award recipients on website.  
Please visit: [www.cpreglos.org.uk/awards](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk/awards)





Stone stiles are an unassuming mainstay of our landscape, with many stiles in Gloucestershire’s countryside dating back over 200 years. They have dotted the land for much longer; for centuries, stone stiles have allowed pedestrian access across the countryside. Today they open a window to the past, showing us where pathways predating land enclosure once lay and hinting at where villages and farmsteads long disappeared once stood. They remain a vital part of our countryside; providing access to local walkers along pathways whilst simultaneously preventing sheep and cattle from moving afield.

an article in her Parish magazine. She has now visited an outstanding 1000 stone stiles and has gone beyond Gloucestershire to report stiles elsewhere in the UK. As a result of Jayne’s dedication to the project, she received a BBC Radio 4 Award for services to the environment, accompanied by CPRE Gloucestershire.

# The Gloucestershire Stone Stiles Project

Discover your local heritage

## Interactive stiles map

Anyone can help count our county’s stone stiles. Do you know of a stone stile where you live? Can you note the GPS location and check the project’s interactive map to see if the stile has been recorded? There’s a link through our website on [cpre.org.uk/creating-a-record-of-gloucestershire-stone-stiles](http://cpre.org.uk/creating-a-record-of-gloucestershire-stone-stiles). If you’ve found an unrecorded stile, please get in touch with the project team. If you have managed to take a photo, even better!

## Recording stiles

Despite their importance to the natural landscape of the county, no records existed of their number and location. Only if properly recorded, could their conservation be prioritised. Spearheaded by CPRE Gloucestershire volunteer Peter Wilson, the ‘Gloucestershire Stone Stiles Project’(GSSP) was launched in the summer of 2022 with support from the team here at CPRE Gloucestershire and Cotteswold Naturalists’ Field Club.

Since the project launched in the summer of 2022, over 100 volunteers have reported and catalogued over 1100 stiles! Volunteers record the location and stile-type through an interactive online map, supplying the master index of every recording reported. With any duplicate sightings, new information on stile conditions is recorded, adding to the breadth of information the project provides on these unassuming artefacts.

The project volunteers include a few prolific stile spotters; a special mention to Jayne Tovey from Ampney Crucis who was inspired to get involved after reading



## What’s next for the project?

With over 1,100 stone stiles now included on the online map, the team is confident they have mapped the great majority of stone stiles across Gloucestershire. But not all. Volunteer-reports of new stone stiles still come in regularly, and the team makes sure they are added to the map as well as logging significant changes to known stone stiles. Work recently started with the Cotswold Wardens to cross check their index of stiles from 2012. The volunteers have been so enthused by the project, they’ve gone outside the Gloucestershire border; the map now covers the whole of Great Britain and at current count there are close to 3000 stone-stiles also recorded outside of the county!

## Get involved

There is still time to get involved in this fantastic project and contribute to the preservation of historical artefacts in Gloucestershire’s countryside.

Please visit [www.cpreglos.org.uk/stone-stiles](http://www.cpreglos.org.uk/stone-stiles) or email [info@cpreglos.org.uk](mailto:info@cpreglos.org.uk) to find out more and get involved.