



Sussex
Countryside
Trust

Protecting
your Countryside

The Sussex Branch of the
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Registered Charity Number 265028

Annual Report

2013



Chairman's Report 2013

2013 has been a year of considerable change for our Branch, in response to:

- ↔ The gathering impact of a new system of planning – the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- ↔ The need to engage more closely with digital means of communication.
- ↔ The need to deploy the resources of the Branch both material and human to greatest effect.
- ↔ Improve the governance of the Branch in line with the new status of CIO Commission.

CPRE Sussex covers an area of great administrative complexity. We have two counties and a major city, twelve local planning authorities, 251 Parish and Town Councils and a newly established South Downs National Park which is both the largest and the most populous in the country. The focus of attention has been largely on the district councils; all (and the National Park) are required to produce a Local Plan which passes the scrutiny of the Planning Inspectorate. Currently the majority of local authorities in Sussex have no binding Local Plan. In the absence of such a plan developers have been able to cite a clause in the NPPF mandating that in the absence of a Local Plan presumption must be in favour of “sustainable development”. As a result developers have been making speculative applications throughout our territory. Public emphasis has been put on Neighbourhood Planning as introduced in the Localism Act, whereby parish councils have been encouraged to formulate plans for their own neighbourhood. This Branch has worked with several parish councils to help them develop Neighbourhood Plans.

We need to build our membership and volunteers, and to find new ways of utilising the talents and abilities of young people at affordable cost to them. We want to make the public more aware of our existence and of the work we do, and increase our public profile. This has meant developing a sophisticated and interactive website and ensuring that media coverage is secured for our activities. In the course of the year we have held two public meetings. The first was in Shoreham in March 2013 with Nick Herbert MP as keynote speaker. The second was held in Hassocks as part of the campaign against proposals for a new town east of Burgess Hill.

During 2012 the Executive initiated a strategy and effectiveness review which resulted in the branch developing two major sub-committees that began to operate in the autumn. These are:

The Countryside Action Team to deal with publicity, recruitment and communications

and **The Protect Sussex Group** which is to concentrate on campaigning at local level and building the capability of district groups.

We have also begun to consider ways in which we can improve the reach of the organisation through districts and new forms of group work. We are examining local operational protocols and governance to learn from best practice across the Branch.

In 2013 we were pleased to welcome as our new Chairman, David Johnson, who brings extensive experience of management in both a business and a charity context and a commitment to protecting the countryside. Richard Shirley replaced Peter Lansberry as our Treasurer. We said an appreciative farewell to Chairman Rodney Chambers and to Peter Lansberry, however are delighted that Rodney Chambers is staying on as a Trustee.

The Branch continues to be ably led by the Director Georgia Wrighton and the staff at the Blackboys office. We were sorry to have to accept the retirement of Liz Beeney who has worked tirelessly for 17 years as our administrator. Her place has been filled by Lesley Wilson with great competence. Sas Drury continues to take care of our day to day accounts.

Despite the strength of our organisation we need to find improved ways of better using the talents and skills of members in educating the public and protecting the countryside. Sussex CPRE faces a considerable struggle to preserve the countryside over such a large area. The winter floods which led to so many Sussex rivers overwhelming their banks and considerable coastal erosion, refocused our minds on the importance of understanding local drainage systems, farming and field management, coastal protection and the impact of climate change. The value of maintaining our rivers' flood plains has been made clearer, and the need to ensure that any developments in these areas are sensitive and appropriate has never been more urgent.

David Johnson
Chairman

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present the financial statements, drawn up in accordance with current statutory requirements, the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in March 2005 and the Branch's governing document.

Constitution, objectives and activities

CPRE Sussex is an unincorporated association and The Branch's governing document is "The Constitution of the Sussex Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England" approved by the AGM in 2003. The Branch is restricted by its Constitution from undertaking any substantial permanent trading activities.

The objects of the Branch shall be to promote and encourage for the benefit of the public the improvement, protection and preservation of the countryside of Sussex and its towns and villages and the environmentally better development of the same.

Public benefit reporting

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

Sussex Countryside Trust

Sussex Countryside Trust, is a company limited by guarantee, to protect the use of the name. That company has not yet carried out any activities and it is not currently expected to do so during 2014. The company is under common control as its shareholders and directors are all trustees of CPRE Sussex.

Financial review and reserves

The Chairman's report included in these accounts gives a full description of the activities and results for the year. The trustees consider that the level of reserves is adequate to support the current activities for the next two or three years, and are actively reviewing the future funding to ensure that CPRE Sussex can continue to be an effective voice for the future. The trustees review the financial and other risks when appropriate.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- ↵ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ↵ observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- ↵ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ↵ state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- ↵ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate that the charity will continue business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enables them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Committee of Trustees on 12 April 2014 and signed on its behalf by:

David Johnson
Chairman

Charity number: 265028

Trustees

The Trustees at the date the report was approved were:

Chairman

David Johnson

Treasurer

Richard Shirley

Executive Committee Members

Mr M Brown

Mr R Chambers

Mr J French-Brooks

Mr S Hardy

Ms P Hudd

Dr J Kay

Prof E Critchley, Mr S Derwent, Prof C Lewis and Dr R Smith resigned as Trustees at the AGM of 10 July 2013.

Mr P Lansberry resigned at the Executive Meeting of 23 November 2013.

Mr R Shirley, Mrs A Reynolds and Mr D Johnson were co-opted as Trustees at the Executive Meeting of 23 November 2013. Mrs A Reynolds resigned at the Exec meeting of 15th February 2014

New trustees are appointed after a review of the skills required and are drawn from individuals who have relevant backgrounds. When appropriate the trustees consult other relevant organisations for nominations to the committee. New trustees are provided with an introduction to the Charity.



Abridged Financial Information

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st December 2013

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2013 £	Total 2012 £
INCOMING RESOURCES				
CPRE Members Branch Share	29,183	-	29,183	25,344
Investment Income	2,215	-	2,215	2,578
Legacies	-	-	-	2,615
Donations	37,428	-	37,428	18,214
Gift Aid	905	-	905	344
Other Income	2,473	-	2,473	6,600
Total Incoming Resources	72,204	-	72,204	55,695
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Cost of generating funds				
Costs of generating income	375	-	375	1,810
Cost of Charitable Activities				
Costs in furtherance of the objects of the charity	72,107	10,200	82,307	72,477
Governance Costs	3,713	-	3,713	2,084
Total Resources Expanded	76,195	10,200	86,395	76,371
Net Incoming/ (Outgoing) Resources before Transfers	(3,991)	(10,200)	(14,191)	(20,676)
Gains/(Losses) on Investment Assets Unrealised & Realised	14,277	-	14,277	7,347
Net Movements in Funds	10,286	10,200	86	(13,329)
Funds balances at 1 Jan 2013	235,238	15,927	251,165	264,494
Fund balances at 31 Dec 2013	245,524	5,727	251,251	251,165

Balance sheet at 31st December 2013

	2013 £	2012 £
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible Assets	-	631
Stock and Bond Investment	81,485	67,583
	81,485	68,214
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors, Prepayments & Deposits	12,883	7,450
Short term deposits	140,227	170,020
Cash at bank and in hand	17,568	7,192
	170,678	184,662
LESS CREDITORS		
Amounts falling due within one year	912	1,711
Net Current Assets	169,766	182,951
Net Assets	251,251	251,165
Capital Funds		
Income Funds		
Restricted	5,727	15,927
Unrestricted	245,524	235,238
	251,251	251,165

These figures are extracted from the full Trustees' Report and financial statements which have been independently examined by Mr C R Tyler of Clark Brownscombe Limited who gave an unqualified statement on 1 May 2014. The Independent Examiner has confirmed to the Trustees that the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2013. The Trustees' Report and financial statements were approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf on 12 April 2014. They will be submitted to the Charity Commission. These summarised financial statements may not contain sufficient information to gain a complete understanding of the financial affairs of CPRE Sussex. The full Trustees' Report, Independent Examiner's Report and Financial Statements may be obtained from CPRE Sussex, Brownings Farm, Blackboys, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5HG. **David Johnson, Chairman**



CPRE Sussex Countryside Trust
Brownings Farm
Blackboys, Uckfield
East Sussex, TN22 5HG

CPRE Sussex Countryside Trust is the Sussex Branch
of the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

We exist to promote the beauty, tranquility
and diversity of rural England by encouraging
the sustainable use of land and natural resources
in town and country.

www.cpresussex.org.uk

Photographs: David Rees Davies