

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023  
FOR**

**BEDFORDSHIRE BRANCH OF THE  
CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND**

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER:1023435**

**THE BEDFORDSHIRE BRANCH OF THE  
CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND  
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

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**THE BEDFORDSHIRE BRANCH OF THE  
CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND  
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**TRUSTEES**

Dr Martin Christopher (Chairman)  
Paul Jenkins (Vice Chair)  
Juliet Ware (Treasurer)  
John English  
Susan Lynch (Resigned April 2023)  
Fred Motson  
Carmel Edwards (Resigned Nov 2023)  
Andrew Jeavons-Fellows (Resigned Nov 2023)

**PRINCIPAL ADDRESS**

43 Bromham Road  
Bedford  
MK40 2AA

**REGISTERED CHARITY NO.**

1023435

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

Gerald Bygrave FMAAT  
GB Accounting Solutions  
Millennium Studios  
Bedford Technology Park  
Thurleigh  
Bedford  
MK44 2YA

**THE BEDFORDSHIRE BRANCH OF THE  
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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Objectives and aims.**

The objects of the Branch are to promote and encourage, for the benefit of the public, the improvement, protection, and preservation of the countryside of Bedfordshire and its towns and villages, including the area administered by the Borough of Luton, together with the better development of the rural environment.

### **Public benefit**

In planning the charity's activities for the year, the trustees kept in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

## **ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE**

### **Charitable activities**

In promoting and encouraging 'the improvement, protection and preservation of the Bedfordshire countryside', the charity achieved its aims across several broad areas. We have:

Examined hundreds of planning applications. This is an essential part of our day-to-day work, and we make strong representations where our objectives are affected. Our main concern lies in applications for major housing developments, but we have examined a range of other planning applications too.

Promoted the Living Countryside Awards to highlighting community groups and organisations that are working to enhance their local environment. The Bedfordshire Choice Award received over 1600 votes.

Taken part in a number of public consultations including the Bedford Borough Local Plan and published a number of briefing documents to guide parish councils and community organisations.

Supported 15 Local Action Groups giving them skills and knowledge to campaign to protect their local environment from development and empowering communities to have a say in their local area.

Taken part in national CPRE campaigns and initiatives including The Star Count, Hedgerow Help out and Rooftop Renewables.

Developed our social media platforms to increase followers and promote our work more widely.

Raised income through trusts, grants, events, and donations.

Represented our members and communities on regional and government groups including Highways England Stakeholder Group, England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Forum and London's Metropolitan Green Belt Council

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**FINANCIAL REVIEW**

**Reserves policy**

The Trustees aim to maintain reserves in unrestricted funds at a level that equates to twelve months of unrestricted charitable expenditure. The Trustees consider that this level will provide sufficient funds to cover fixed including salaries and rent and governance costs. At the end of the year, our unrestricted reserves were in below the level required to provide this cover.

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## **FUTURE PLANS**

Our activity is guided by a Strategic Plan that is reviewed annually. Future activity will develop our main areas of expertise, particularly in the area of environmental planning but the Plan also highlights the need to:

Continue to develop our work supporting Local Action groups and empower communities.

Continue developing our marketing activity to promote our messages to the wider public.

Promote the Living Countryside Awards to celebrate the people and projects that have a positive impact on Bedfordshire's rural environment and urban green spaces.

Work to develop a local hedgerow project as part of the national Hedgerow Heroes initiative.

Increase our efforts to recruit and retain supporters and volunteers and develop diversity across the organisation.

Continue to develop the long-term sustainability of the organisation.

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **Governing document**

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission (Reg Charity No. **1023435**) and controlled by its governing document,

### **Organisational, structure and accountability**

The Board of Trustees have overall responsibility for the Charity and operate a system of accountability. This includes the three-year Strategic Plan and an annual budget. Performance is evaluated against the plan regularly during the year at Trustee meetings and a complete review takes place annually.

The Board of Trustees currently consists of five members all of whom are elected at the Annual General Meeting, including the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Treasurer. They meet formally at least six times per year.

The day to day operations are delegated to the Director, who is employed on a part time paid basis. The Director manages the Digital Engagement Officer (salaried role) and volunteers, all of whom are part time. All vacancies for Trustees, paid staff and volunteers are openly advertised, utilising specific descriptions that have regard to the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary for each role.

### **Induction and training of new trustees**

New Trustees are provided with the Charity Commission's "The Essential Trustee" which focuses on the main duties and responsibilities of the role, along with CPRE Bedfordshire's Constitution, Three Year Strategic Plan, and other documents pertaining to the Charity's history and current activities. All new Trustees are invited to participate in CPRE Bedfordshire's local induction as well as an induction by the national CPRE organisation. New Trustees are encouraged to visit the Charity's small office in Bedford, meet with the staff, and become familiar with the Charity's operations. Depending upon the Trustee's specific role and interests, additional training is available including an extensive curriculum hosted by the national CPRE organisation and local Community and Voluntary Service.

### **Risk management.**

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The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

**Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:**

Martin Christopher – Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MC', with a large, stylized loop on the left side.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL  
ENGLAND BEDFORDSHIRE**

**THE BEDFORDSHIRE BRANCH OF THE  
CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND  
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on page eight.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

**It is my responsibility to:**

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Gerald Bygraves FMAAT

GB Accounting Solutions Limited  
Millennium Studios  
Bedford Technology Park  
Thurleigh  
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Bedfordshire  
MK44 2YA

Date: 20th April 2024



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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**

**CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND BEDFORDSHIRE BRANCH  
(Registered Charity No. 1023435)  
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDING 31/12/2023**

**RECEIPTS**

	<u>Total 2023</u>	<u>Total 2022</u>
Membership fees	9220	8526
Donations	1024	848
Grants & Legacies	10050	14256
Workshops	105	2460
Gift Aid	178	-
Bank interest	155	21
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>20732</b>	<b>26111</b>

	<u>Total 2023</u>	
<b>PAYMENTS</b>		
Salaries	20696	19371
<b>Office cost</b>		
-Rent	2774	2774
-Insurance	383	347
-IT	141	296
-Office expenditure	256	
<b>Marketing</b>		
-Beds Matters	1000	1386
-Postage	-	456
Workshops	76	690
Travel expenses	149	35
Governance	140	54
Subscriptions	25	25
Consumables	195	-
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>25835</b>	<b>25434</b>

**ASSETS & LIABILITIES  
AT YEAR ENDING 31/12/2023**

**ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022
Cheque Account	377	1105.83
Business Account	15650	20024.26
Cash in hand	8.25	8.25
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>16035</b>	<b>21138.34</b>

**FUNDS**

Brought forward from previous year	21138.34	20461.04
Carried forward	16035	21138.34