



The countryside charity  
Shropshire

# Autumn Newsletter 2022



## A welcome from our new Chair, Susan Lockwood

In June of this year, I celebrated my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday which some people might think is too old to be Chair of a county charity. Not at all! I am energised to protect our wonderful Shropshire countryside with all its diversities. I am so grateful that I have such an experienced team of trustees to advise me and an excellent branch manager.

One of my goals during the next few months is to recruit young people to take an active part in what we do. We have much to offer: the hedgerow project, campaigns aimed at preserving and improving our countryside and encouraging people of all ages to get out into the countryside. Another goal is to spread the word across the county that we are The Countryside Charity.

During 2023 we will have stalls at several “green” events such as the Ludlow Green Fair and the busy Burwarton Show (where last August we held a popular Tree Quiz and demonstrated how to lay a hedge).

The current climate crisis is of great concern. CPRE Shropshire is liaising with other national and local groups to publicise the need to “go green.” We recently had a meeting with South Shropshire Climate Action to look at how we might work together in future, and there is a piece about them on the back page of this newsletter. A major focus for us is our “Every village, every hour” campaign for more buses - electric of course.

One of my main concerns is providing affordable housing in rural areas. Not social housing, but housing that young people, who want to stay in their village, can afford. CPRE’s expertise in challenging inappropriate housing developments is invaluable.

Veteran Oak at Honeyhole, near Bucknell on  
an autumn day (c) Sarah Jameson



A new link to CPRE Head Office in London has been the recent formation of the Assembly (with one representative from each county branch), which will provide a means for all CPRE branches in England, to consider matters of interest to them, and from that shape, influence and advise what happens within CPRE to protect and promote its charitable purposes.

Finally I would just like to extend my huge thanks to Connor Furnival for his hard work and vision as Chair of CPRE Shropshire until this Summer when he had to stand down.

I look forward to catching up with you in our next newsletter to let you know how we are doing.

Susan Lockwood, Chair, CPRE Shropshire

## Changes at CPRE Shropshire

Connor Furnival stood down as Chair of CPRE in July 2022 but we are very pleased to say he remains a Trustee.

Susan Lockwood, who was Vice Chair, has been co-opted as Chair in the meantime and is taking up the reins. She hopes to be attending local events and meetings in her new capacity over the next few months.

Linda Charie stood down as Treasurer at the AGM back in June and has been replaced by Charles Green - also of course our Planning Spokesperson!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank both Connor and Linda so much for their generous contributions as Chair and Treasurer. We are very pleased that both remain on the Branch committee.



## CPRE Shropshire now on YouTube

We now have an active YouTube channel online. The easiest way to find it is go to YouTube at:

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and in the search box put in CPRE Shropshire.

That should bring up a page with our videos listed, including all our hedge talks from 2021/22 and Sally Green's two geology talks (see opposite). We will continue to add content to the channel as and when it is created.

## Big Solar Co-op



As shown elsewhere in this newsletter, solar energy is already an important part of the mix of energy supplying the nation's electricity needs, but solar farms can be controversial.

We think that solar panels should be put on roofs in preference to being put onto prime agricultural land. You can read more about the whole solar debate, and CPRE's stance both nationally and locally, on our website at [www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/solar-farms](http://www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/solar-farms). Developers prefer greenfield sites because brownfield sites, roofs and car parks are more expensive to deal with.

But now a firm with strong Shropshire connections is indeed going to put solar panels on roofs. The Big Solar Co-op has recently got its first share offer running and you can see the details at [www.bigsolar.coop/invest](http://www.bigsolar.coop/invest). Two out of the first three roofs will be in Shropshire. We are therefore drawing your attention to this in case you, like some of our members already have, wish to support this venture by applying to invest in shares in it. They have already raised over £600,000 in shares from members of the public investing between £100 and £50,000 and are now extending the share offer until 10th December 2022.

Of course, all such investments are at risk and community energy investors are advised to spread their investments, not put all their eggs into one basket.

# Sally Green's Shropshire Geology talks

You may well have attended or watched the recorded version of Sally Green's fascinating and entertaining geology talks. If not, the first: *The Geology of Shropshire* and this year's: *The Ice Age in Shropshire* can both be watched again on our CPRE Shropshire YouTube channel (more information about that opposite). Here Sally gives us a taste of two further talks to come in 2023 and 2024.

The threats to the countryside we face these days are actually as nothing compared to what happened in the 18th and 19th century, when Shropshire spearheaded the Industrial Revolution, following enclosure and deforestation in earlier centuries. Indeed the landscape is a highly dynamic system.

Mining initiated a huge insult to the natural landscape, but was a direct result of the county's amazingly varied geology; coal, iron and limestone all being found close together in the Ironbridge Gorge.

My next two talks in 2023 and 2024 will examine the changes which occurred to our county and why, by looking how ore veins formed and intruded in to bedrocks, iron was deposited, and how and when coal forests grew. We also host copper, lead, silver, barytes and other important and exploitable minerals. Their mining caused immense changes to the landscape, the growth of characteristic industrial settlements and associated industrial buildings, and growth of towns and villages.

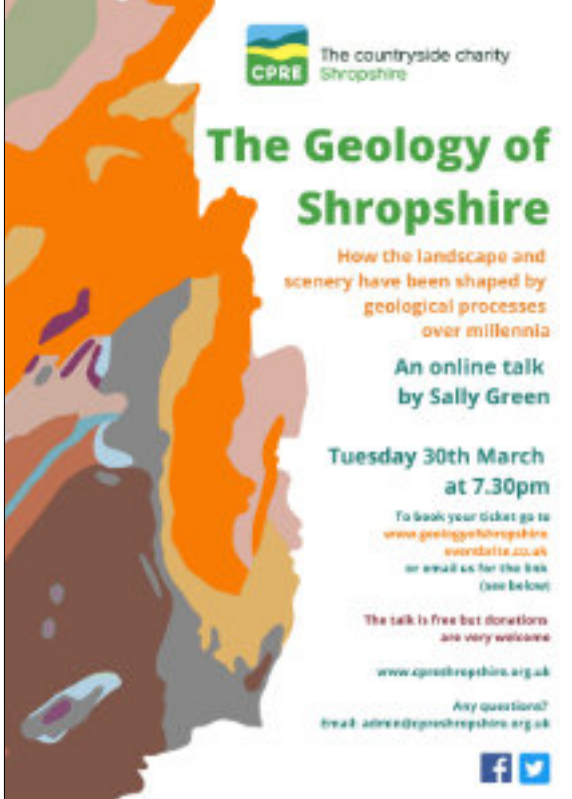
When these deposits had either been worked out or demand fell, we were left with despoliated and polluted sites and job losses and concurrent out migration. I will examine the 'then and now' scene and how sites have been restored, or used for heritage projects and what the future might hold as we decarbonise.

We all witnessed the felling of Buildwas power station and the change this wrought to the view of the gorge, for better or worse, and house builders are tasked with de-polluting these places.

In early 2024, I will look at another big Shropshire industry: quarrying - and how the landscape has absorbed sometimes huge quarries and how wildlife and landscape has benefitted in many cases.

So the county changes constantly and it is the task of CPRE to maintain a watching brief and raise concerns when results threaten to destroy our precious places for future generations.

Sally Green  
Co-Chair CPRE Shropshire Oswestry District



The countryside charity  
Shropshire

## The Geology of Shropshire

How the landscape and scenery have been shaped by geological processes over millennia

An online talk by Sally Green



Tuesday 30th March at 7.30pm

To book your ticket go to [www.geologyinshropshire.co.uk](http://www.geologyinshropshire.co.uk) or email us for the link (see below)

The talk is free but donations are very welcome

[www.cpre-shropshire.org.uk](http://www.cpre-shropshire.org.uk)

Any questions? Email: [admin@pre-shropshire.org.uk](mailto:admin@pre-shropshire.org.uk)



The countryside charity  
Shropshire

## The Ice Age in Shropshire

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022, 7.30pm  
A free online talk by Sally Green

Shropshire stands right at the southern end of the last Ice Age ice cap, which had a profound effect on our landscape.

Find out about the dramatic climatic changes in the last two million years and the effect of ice movement on the formation of our country's topography.

A follow-up evening to Sally's highly popular talk on Shropshire Geology, this is definitely not to be missed!

Limited places available.

Go to the Events page at [www.cpre-shropshire.org.uk](http://www.cpre-shropshire.org.uk) to book your free place.

[www.cpre-shropshire.org.uk](http://www.cpre-shropshire.org.uk)

# CPRE Shropshire Planning Update

Charles Green, CPRE Shropshire Planning Spokesperson

CPRE people are working in the background all the time to try to protect our valuable countryside! Here are some of the areas we have been concentrating on over the last few months in Shropshire.

## Shropshire Council Local Plan Review

The local plan Examination in Public has currently ground to a halt because of deliberations over the “Duty to Cooperate” with the Black Country authorities. This is primarily because the Bradford Estate team do not think Shropshire Council, in deciding to take 1,500 houses and up to 30Ha of employment land as “overspill” from the Black Country, has adequately liaised with the Black Country over the Bradford Estate’s ambition for the huge development they want by Junction 3 of the M54.

The next public event will be a virtual hearing into this on 17 January 2023. Until this “Duty to Cooperate” issue is resolved we are unlikely to learn what the Inspectors’ take is on all the issues that came up at the hearing sessions in July. In the meantime, the four Black Country Authorities (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton) appear to want each to go it alone, rather than acting together. It is a slow process!

## Renewables

The conflicts between the need for renewable energy, the desire to protect the countryside from industrialisation, the continued need for farmland for food security, and localism, have all been brought out by the recent spate of applications for solar farms. The Southern Planning Committee, at their meeting on 27 September, took the clear view that solar farms should not go onto good agricultural land, and refused a 12MW solar application on that basis. The 50MW application at Greete was sent back for a rethink and was then passed at the next meeting on 18 October, after 10% had been removed from the “Best and Most Versatile” land. This BMV land is defined in the rules as being Grades 1, 2 and 3a in the national Agricultural Land Classification system. The land on which the remaining 45MW at Greete will be built is mainly 3b land, but the local farmers say this is just as good at producing crops.

There is a very useful website at <https://grid.iamkate.com> which shows how much of our electricity currently comes from renewables, and how much of that from solar pv. The charts opposite come from that and show our GB electricity demand and what sources of generation met it over the last year.

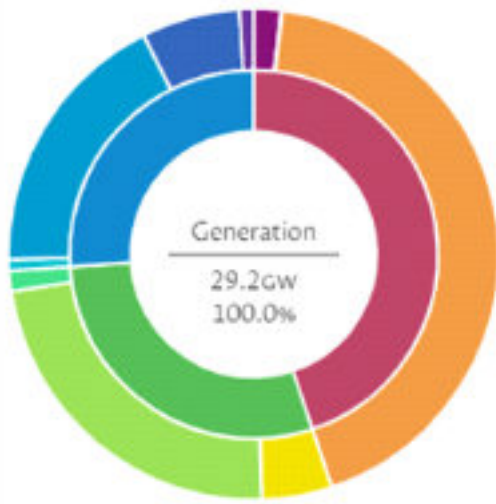
The circles show that much generation continued to come from fossil fuels and the vast majority of that was from gas. Wind is far and away the largest source of renewables (and most of that is off-shore). Nuclear is the biggest source of “other energy”. The big dip in the black demand line at the top right is over the Christmas week. It is then clear from the lines below that gas generation has to be quickly ramped up whenever the renewable generation (notoriously intermittent) drops off. The yellow solar pv line is a small proportion of the whole. The problem with solar is shown by the other chart, from the [www.solar.sheffield.ac.uk/pvlive/](http://www.solar.sheffield.ac.uk/pvlive/) website (which is linked from the above site). That problem is the fact that solar pv doesn’t work overnight, and not very well on cloudy days. The chart shown is for the week ending 23 October 2022.

## National Policy

We rely on national CPRE to lobby the Government over national policy, but of course we have to keep our eye on what is going on, to the extent that it affects us here in Shropshire. During the lifetime of the Shropshire Local Plan Review (nearly six years to date!) there have been numerous Government White Papers, housing need formulas, threats of zoning etc. The latest idea was of course “The Growth Plan 2022”, courtesy of Truss/Kwarteng, but we all know that and they lasted only days/weeks!

The national papers offered interesting opposing views on these recent discredited efforts to grow the economy. One satirist suggested that they might be trying to “harvest the greed of the very worst people”. The leader of the think tank behind some of the ideas argued that they just haven’t been able “to articulate our story more compellingly”! Here in the real world, our kittens are growing nicely, but I and every other adult I know stopped growing some years ago. Evolution discovered many aeons ago that continued growth is just not a viable long-term strategy. Greta Thunberg has also of course cautioned against “fairy tales” of eternal economic growth.





### fossil fuels

- Coal
- Oil
- Gas (open cycle)
- Gas (combined cycle)

### renewable energy

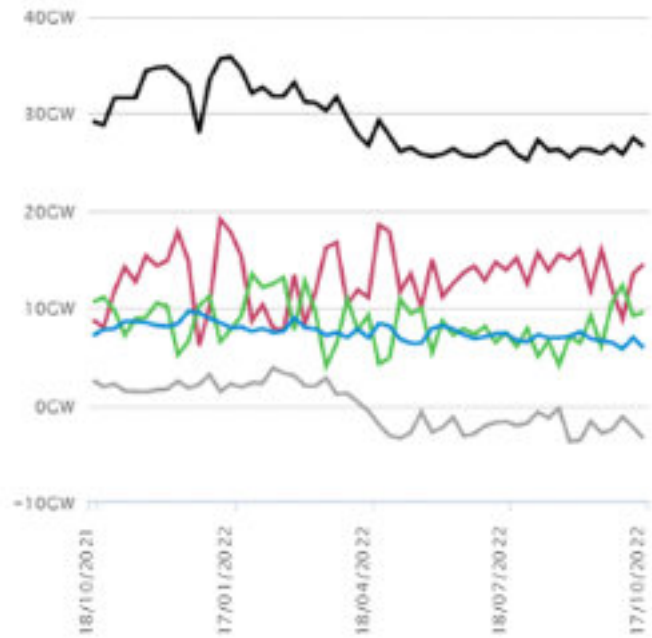
- Solar photovoltaic
- Wind
- Hydroelectric

### other energy

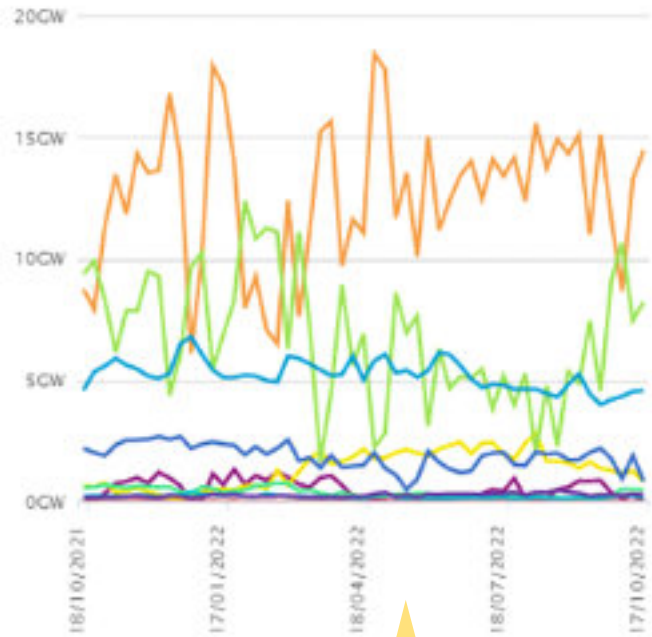
- Pumped storage
- Nuclear
- Biomass
- Other

### imports and exports

### Demand

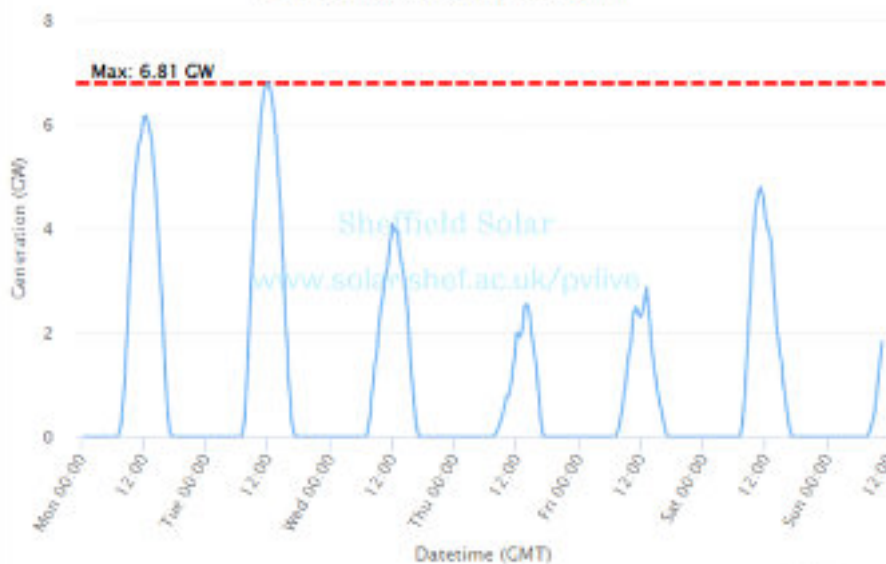


### Power sources



### PV Generation: Last 7 days

Click and drag in the plot area to zoom in



National Grid : Great Britain electricity generation and demand – year to mid-October 2022



*The first hedgelaying workshop of Autumn 2022 took place on 21/22 October. Here are the 13 triumphant trainees next to their very well laid hedge*

CPRE Shropshire's hedgerow project is now well in to its second year and the summer and early autumn have been busy with preparations for hedge creation, hedgelaying training workshops and lots of other hedge activities.

## Hedge Creation

Our original plan to plant 3km of new native species hedgerow in the county this year were somewhat overturned when we realised almost every site we had visited this summer was worth following up. After a frenetic 10 days of emails and phone calls we were delighted to have attracted enough extra funding to allow us to plant 5.5km this season. This is fantastic news. The whips will be bought from both Bucknell Nursery and Prees Heath this year since our project now has several sites in the Telford and Shrewsbury areas as well as in the South.

Dates for hedge planting will be published shortly, so if you are interested in joining us to plant one or more hedges this winter in Shropshire, do keep an eye on our website at [www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/hedgerow-project](http://www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/hedgerow-project) or sign up for our mailing list (if you have not already) via our Contact Us page.

We will be planting hedges on a wide variety of sites from arable farms in the flatlands near Telford, to livestock farms in the Shropshire hills, as well as churchyards, allotments, community sites, smallholdings and meadows with public access. Most sites have good to excellent public benefit being on rights of way or near roads and lanes and all will provide excellent habitat and corridors for wildlife once they have matured.

## Hedgerow Management workshops

We ran two very successful hedgerow management workshops in early October in Telford and in the Shropshire Hills at Ratlinghope. We invited Nigel Adams up to lead them - an all-round hedgerow expert who advises farmers and conservation groups around the country on the best way of managing hedgerows for maximum nature benefit and also for their benefits to the land and the farms.

On the Telford workshop we had several attendees from the local Harper Adams agricultural college as well as a number of farmers/landowners and representatives from the Wildlife Trust and a local nature reserve.

## Hedgelaying training

Our first hedgelaying training workshop took place on 21-22 October at the Cavalier Centre, near Much Wenlock. Thirteen volunteers were divided into groups and over two days they laid 30m of hedgerow between them. There are six more workshops coming up in November. They are all booked up for now but we do get late cancellations should you wish to put your name on the waiting list. The workshops are expertly led by Richard Clarke of Really Rural.



## Hedgerow classes

We have been going out to local primary schools in the south and north of the county running outdoor hedgerow classes. Cath Landles (photo right) from the Shropshire Hills AONB has visited eight schools in the south, showing the children how to measure a hedge and do basic surveying. They children were also learning what the main hedge species are and what a hedge is for.



## Hedgerow Story Sacks

Sarah Griffiths has completed the production of ten Story Sacks which have been created for very small children, complete with felted hedge creatures and picture cards, they are designed to help children look at and learn about the wonders of hedges. The sacks have been donated to lending libraries.

## Upcoming events

### **Coppicing Workshop: 30<sup>th</sup> October**

Mike Taylor will run a workshop for us in his ancient coppice on the edge of the Wrekin at the end of October. He will show us his six coups and how he makes materials for hedgelaying (stakes and binders).

### **Zoom talk on hedgelaying: 7<sup>th</sup> December:**

Derrick Hale an experienced hedgelayer will give us an insight into his life in hedgelaying

which we are told, rather intriguingly, will include a reference to crocodiles. He will also talk about his tools. Booking for this talk will go live in November.

### **Field Names workshop**

This has been deferred to the last week of April 2023. It will take place in Clunton in the Clun Valley. More information about this in due course but many thanks to CPRE member David Booker for being so helpful and constructive in helping us get this event researched.

To keep up to date with the project, keep an eye on the website at [www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/hedgerow-project](http://www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/hedgerow-project)



*Nigel Adams next to a magnificent new hedge on an arable farm at Admaston, Telford on the Hedgerow Management Workshop he led for us in early October 2022*



# South Shropshire Climate Action

South Shropshire Climate Action (SSCA) began in 2019 as a coalition of local organisations and networks committed to addressing the climate and ecological crisis. The mailing list comprises over 400 individuals, but these include representatives of other networks and organisations in the locality, such as Stretton Climate Care, Lightfoot (centred in Bishop's Castle), Clun Climate and Environment Group and Sustainable Bridgnorth. SSCA is represented on local strategic forums including the Local Nature Partnership, the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and Shropshire Council's Climate Advisory Board. Our geographical remit is the Ludlow Parliamentary Constituency, a rural area of 600 square miles with a population of c85,000.

In 2021 we published a "Next Steps Climate Action Plan" for the Ludlow Parliamentary Constituency outlining the actions required to meet a Carbon Net Zero target and which contribute to both human and environmental wellbeing (<https://southshropshireclimateaction.org/plan>).

The approach was structured around four themes: Land and Biodiversity, Transport, Energy and Buildings, and Community and Education. In 2022 SSCA received funding to enable it to appoint two half-time Project Co-ordinators, Nick Read and Fiona Morgan, to help implement delivery of the Plan. Since SSCA is a voluntary association the charity Marches Energy Agency (<https://mea.org.uk>) kindly agreed to act as their employer on behalf of SSCA.

Fiona has a background in social work and university education and is a founding trustee of Climate Action Hub Telford. Nick is an Anglican Priest and Agricultural Chaplain, and formerly worked as Food Policy and Research Adviser for the National Farmers Union and Director of the Bulmer Foundation, a sustainable development charity within Herefordshire. Their work is to support the wide range of networks and organisations active within South Shropshire, adding value to existing initiatives by co-ordinating activity, and making connections both between network members, and on behalf of the network with statutory agencies and other potential partners. To facilitate this, they work closely with the Shropshire-wide group Zero Carbon Shropshire (<https://zerocarbonshropshire.org>).

They are particularly interested in supporting emerging groups within the area that are keen to tackle the climate and ecological crisis, such as parish councils, schools, community and environmental groups. They can offer information and advice, the potential for peer-to-peer support (for example, if you're thinking about a car share club, others can help with their experience), signposting (the SSCA membership has broad skills and experience on which to draw), and advocacy through their links with local strategic forums.

Contact them at [SSCA@mea.org.uk](mailto:SSCA@mea.org.uk)



Nick Read and Fiona Morgan (SSCA Project Co-ordinators), Jane Cullen (SSCA Chair), Simon Ross (MEA)

## CPRE Shropshire contacts

President: Robin Thompson  
[Robin@Sansaw.co.uk](mailto:Robin@Sansaw.co.uk)

Chair: Susan Lockwood  
[susanlockwood345@btinternet.com](mailto:susanlockwood345@btinternet.com)

Branch Manager:  
Sarah Jameson 01547 528546  
[admin@cpreshropshire.org.uk](mailto:admin@cpreshropshire.org.uk)

Planning Spokesperson:  
Charles Green  
[charleswgreen@msn.com](mailto:charleswgreen@msn.com)

Historic Environment/Historic Buildings: Carole Ryan Ridout  
[ryanridout@btinternet.com](mailto:ryanridout@btinternet.com)

Poultry farms/IPUs: Bill Ware  
[bill.ware2@btinternet.com](mailto:bill.ware2@btinternet.com)

Join in:

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

c/o Branch Manager, Sarah Jameson  
[admin@cpreshropshire.org.uk](mailto:admin@cpreshropshire.org.uk)  
01547 528546

CPRE Shropshire: charity number: 1184133



The countryside charity  
Shropshire