

# COUNTRYWISE

Newsletter from CPRE the Countryside Charity  
for Northern Lincolnshire

MARCH 2026

**Contents** *Page 1 – CPRE Centenary*

*Page 2 – Best Kept Village*

*Page 3 – Litter, Environment Award*

*Page 4 – Vision for Planning, Planning Help*

**‘CPRE aims to promote and encourage, for the benefit of the nation, the improvement of the English countryside and its towns and villages, and the better development of the rural environment.’**

CPRE was established in 1926 as a result of the unrestricted development boom that took place after the First World War. At that time there were few, if any, controls on development in the countryside.

CPRE played a key role in the campaigns for the National Parks, green belts and, importantly, the establishment of a nationwide planning system in 1947. It was also instrumental in the establishment of Keep Britain Tidy in 1955 and litter picking remains a key concern.

Other campaigns include Dark Skies which highlighted intrusion of light pollution in even in the most rural of areas, and Action on Hedgerows, an ongoing campaign aimed at reducing the enormous loss of hedgerows, which has happened in the last 70 years.

Throughout its 100 years, CPRE’s main activity has been influencing the planning system, to enable and ensure that development in our countryside and the towns and villages within it, is appropriate and does the least harm to the local environment, while bringing benefits to local people.



**Our centenary vision is for a countryside that’s greener, more resilient and protected for future generations.**

There is a better way – one we’re calling for, and one everyone can be part of:

**Stop the loss of countryside.** Let’s protect what we love and do everything we can to make sure green fields and woodlands aren’t needlessly lost.

**Improve the quality of the countryside for future generations.** That means thriving communities, clean rivers, healthy food and resilient landscapes rich in nature.

**Inspire more people to care for the countryside.** A countryside for all where more people take action to enjoy and protect it.

If the countryside feels special to you, you’re not alone – in fact 91% of Britain feels the same way. CPRE’s recent poll with More in Common, shows overwhelming support for stronger protections, and many people now prioritise living near the countryside over low council tax or even good schools.

The countryside matters. Communities are rejecting the false choice between homes and nature — with enough brownfield land for 1.4 million homes, we can do both.

It’s time for the government to match public ambition and protect our countryside for all. Use the link below to support our Centenary Letter to England.

<https://takeaction.cpre.org.uk/page/183395/petition/1?ea.tracking.id=local-groups>

## 50 YEARS OF BEST KEPT VILLAGE



CPRE wants to share with you in celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, by offering a prize of £250 to the best representation of this event. It could be a floral display, an imaginative planting scheme or something that illustrates one or more aspects of CPRE's activities. What we will be looking for is imagination and originality, and judging will take place as part of the Best Kept Village competition, celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this summer.

Entrants might draw inspiration from the CPRE website <https://www.cpre.org.uk/celebrating-our-centenary/> or possibly the CPRE show garden at the Chelsea Flower Show later this year (see below).



*A bird's eye view of the CPRE Centenary show garden for Chelsea 2026*

The Best Kept Village competition was initially launched in 1976 in Northern Lincolnshire but it had its origins in the 1950s. Many competitions were rooted in the celebrations for Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation in 1953, designed to encourage community pride and tidiness.

Following a 1954 resolution to prevent the desecration of the countryside by litter, the Women's Institute helped form the Keep Britain

Tidy group. They then went on to play a pivotal role in the "Best Kept Village" competitions in the 1950s. In the second half of the decade, CPRE gradually established Best Kept Village competitions in a number of regions across the country and, eventually in 1976 CPRE launched the competition here in Northern Lincolnshire, which quickly proved very popular.

As announced at our last Presentation Evening this year's Best Kept Village is a special anniversary and has attracted additional sponsorship from InternetTY and Quickline, which has enabled us to double the prize money for the main categories, in addition to the special centenary prize.

To encourage more villages and towns to join this popular competition, there is a new entrant category, with free entry for the first year. All entrants can feel pride that they are involving the community in contributing to making their local environment a more attractive place in which to live and visit.

Entries should be returned as soon as possible and no later than 30 June. Please contact Jenny Haynes, the Best Kept Village coordinator [jenny.haynes@btinternet.com](mailto:jenny.haynes@btinternet.com) for more information.



# LITTER MATTERS



CPRE Volunteer Litter Pickers, some of whom are shown above, are doing their best to keep Brigg clear of litter.

One of the team is Tom Watson, (second left above), who is a local firefighter. We really appreciate the support of local people like Tom who give willingly of their time. Tom has also encouraged other firefighters to join in the regular litter picks held in Brigg. David Rose, Chair of CPRE Northern Lincolnshire commented: 'it is particularly pleasing to recognise the community involvement of the Brigg Fire Station in our litter picks and for their ongoing commitment to helping to keep Brigg free of litter.'

CPRE Litter Pickers will be out in force during the Great British Spring Clean, which takes place this year between 13 and 29 March.

Since the Great British Spring Clean began in 2016, millions of Litter Heroes have pledged to pick up more than four and a half million bags of rubbish. Volunteer litter pickers have made a real difference by demonstrating a sense of pride in their communities and a desire to live in clean and attractive places.



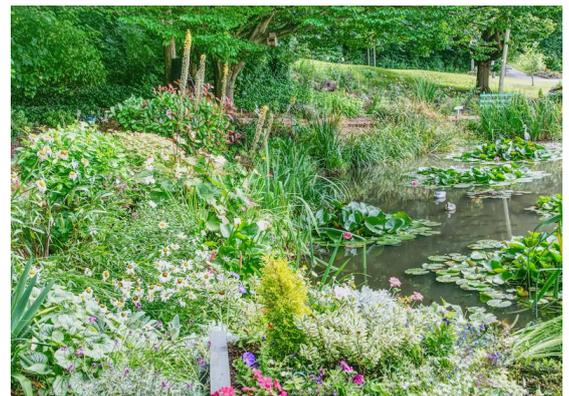
We are fortunate in Northern Lincolnshire to have a good number of volunteers and organised groups who regularly go out litter picking. We also have the support of North Lincolnshire Council, who support our litter picking efforts by supplying equipment and the red sacks that you will see on the side of roads, ready to be collected by the Council.

## ENVIRONMENT AWARD 2026

Every year we recognise and celebrate individuals, groups or organisations that have made a significant contribution to improving the local environment, through our Annual Environment Awards, generously sponsored by InternetTY. If you know of an individual, group or organisation that has made a significant contribution to improving the local environment please contact:

Jenny Haynes [jenny.haynes@btinternet.com](mailto:jenny.haynes@btinternet.com)

or David Rose [davidjohnrose@gmail.com](mailto:davidjohnrose@gmail.com)





## Countryside under threat

The government's draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2025, introduces a "rules-based" system designed to accelerate development, emphasizing national directives over local discretion and introducing "Grey Belt" land release for housing.

CPRE are outraged that the government's proposed changes will further prioritise short-term building targets at the expense of the countryside and the environment. The government's ill-conceived concept of 'grey belt' is further promoted and extended in the proposals.

The proposed changes will weaken protections for the Green Belt, National Landscapes, wildlife habitats, valued landscapes, Local Green Spaces, heritage assets, and the wider countryside.

With local authorities having identified enough brownfield



land for 1.41 million new homes, of which 770,000 already have planning permission, it is a travesty that brownfield development is not the first priority of the Government, with much stronger policies in the new NPPF. In addition, government data shows there are 300,000 long-term empty homes in England, which may be added to the list of potentially available housing.

CPRE have responded to the government consultation on the proposed changes, which we believe will have a major impact on how the countryside is protected and managed.

Watch this space for further updates!

**PLANNING HELP** – If you have any concerns about local plans or potential development in your area, CPRE Northern Lincolnshire can offer professional help or advice using our planning experts. Please contact David Rose [davidjohnrose@gmail.com](mailto:davidjohnrose@gmail.com) or [jenny.haynes@btinternet.com](mailto:jenny.haynes@btinternet.com) giving brief details of your issue or concern.

## JOIN US

Countrywise is the Newsletter of CPRE, the countryside charity – Northern Lincolnshire. The branch is one of over 40 county branches throughout England, with 65,000 supporters nationally. Joining CPRE is open to all and we positively welcome involvement from supporters in all of our activities and campaigns.

**If you would like to learn more about us, our website address is [cprenorthernlinincs.org.uk](http://cprenorthernlinincs.org.uk)**

If you would like to be more involved, please contact either:

**Chair: David Rose** Tel: 07762056445 Email: [davidjohnrose@gmail.com](mailto:davidjohnrose@gmail.com)

**Secretary: Mary Allen** Tel: 07977703623 Email: [maryallen491@gmail.com](mailto:maryallen491@gmail.com)