

**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: 1202399

**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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**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
Fred Motson

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS

43 Bromham Road
Bedford
MK40 2AA

REGISTERED CHARITY NO.

1202399

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 and protection of the English countryside and in particular that of Bedfordshire its towns and villages and 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

The Charity Incorporated Organisation was established with the Charity Commission on 20th March 2023 with a view of transferring from the Registered Charity with the same name (Reg No **1023435**) on 1st January 2023. However, the transfer was delayed due to an issue with banking arrangements and has not yet been resolved at the time of writing this report (May 2024).

All relevant paperwork is in place and the transfer of assets and liabilities will take place once banking arrangements are finalised.

Charitable activities

As the CIO has not been operational during the reporting period there is nothing specific to report.

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Our future activity will be guided by a Strategic Plan and will develop our main areas of expertise, particularly in the area of environmental planning but the strategy 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.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The CIO has no financial assets or liabilities for the period 20th March- 31st December 2023.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission (Reg Charity No. 1202399) 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 including the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Treasurer. They will 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.

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Risk management.

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 26th May 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Martin Christopher – Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MC', with a large, loopy flourish underneath.