



The countryside charity  
London

Working for a greener city



# Report and Accounts

For the year ended  
31 December 2023

Registered Charity: 802622



**Registered address** CPRE London  
70 Cowcross Street  
London EC1M 6EJ

**Trustees (as at 31 December 2023)**

**Chair**, Tony Burton CBE (Re-elected June 2023)

**Treasurer**, Alena Kalashnikova (Re-elected June 2023)

**Honorary Secretary**, Sally Penrose (Re-elected June 2023- retired October 2023)

**Honorary Secretary**, Ian Ashman (Co-opted November 2023)

**General Trustees**

Emma Bould (Re- elected June 2023)

Catherine Irving-Johnstone (Re- elected June 2023)

Tara-Jane Sutcliffe (Re- elected June 2023)

Justin Portess (Re-elected June 2023)

Charlotte Ellis (Co-opted November 2023)

Chris Falconer (Co-opted November 2023)

**Independent accounts examiner**

Judith Brookfield  
Brookfield & Co  
18 Concanon Road  
London  
SW2 5TA



### Introduction to CPRE London

CPRE London is an independently registered charity, which also works collaboratively with the national network of CPRE, the countryside charity. We campaign to make our city a greener and healthier place for everyone.

We have a formidable reputation for providing evidence-based, passionate campaigns which make a difference. In doing this we draw on our core strengths:

- **We are recognised as London’s leading environmental charity protecting green spaces and promoting the regeneration of previously developed sites**
- **We are respected by the GLA, London borough councils and other policy makers as an authoritative voice in the planning and development of London**
- **We are trusted by a network of more than 100 community groups to provide critical advice to support their local campaigns**
- **We directly support more than 600 friends of green space groups through our GoParksLondon programme**
- **We convene the More Natural Capital Coalition – a coalition of 20 environmental charities working together to identify key green priorities for the capital and advocate jointly for action**

**Our vision:** A city with a network of green spaces which are accessible to all, rich in nature and playing a crucial role in responding to the climate emergency.

#### Our strategic goals:

**Protect** and enhance London’s green spaces

**Revitalise** and improve London’s built environment

**Engage** a wide range of people in connecting with nature and enjoying London’s landscapes

**Organise** and develop our capacity through partnering, communications, fundraising and developing our volunteer base



## Specific objectives for 2023:

- Creating Green Belt woodland through GLA funded research, and identifying opportunities to extend this to wider landscape enhancement
- Safeguarding the Green Belt and encouraging compact development
- Working with campaigners to safeguard neglected sites and create ten new parks
- Continuing to lead the Healthy Streets and More Natural Capital coalitions
- Promoting campaign messages in the build up to the mayoral and national elections and developing a stronger political engagement strategy
- Continuing to support delivery of the London Urban Forest Plan including hedgerow creation
- Expanding our seasonal events programme and helping more people get the health benefits of visiting green spaces.
- Increase regular skilled volunteer contribution
- Recruiting new skilled trustees and refreshing our overarching strategic plan.

## Achievements in 2023

### Protecting green spaces

- Over 2023, we supported **more than 40** campaigns to **protect green spaces** across London.
- Opposed the **takeover of public spaces** by professional **sports clubs** such as Tottenham Hotspur Football Club
- Exposed the **massacre of trees** in Bromley and encouraged **long term protection** for the site
- Coordinated a network of local activists to successfully oppose Ealing Council's plan to strip **protective designation** from areas of Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land
- Helped save **green space from being built on** at Park Road Allotments in Hounslow, Ham House in Richmond, and Dover's Farm Estate in Havering

### Case Study

#### Pressing for prosecution over Bromley tree massacre

June 2023, over 100 trees, predominantly oaks, were chopped down on land adjoining Cator Park in Bromley, despite being covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Shocking footage captured by CPRE London volunteer Mike Shilling made headlines across local and national media, and CPRE London leapt into action to support local campaigners bringing landowners to account.

The site, which is designated as Metropolitan Open Land (with the same level of protection from development as Green Belt), has been regularly used by the public for at least 25 years and is a haven for wildlife. The site is now better protected following the securing of an injunction by Bromley Council which means any further damage to trees on site could lead to the perpetrator being jailed. In August the council also directed the landowner to replant to compensate for the trees lost – although as yet no replanting has taken place, so further work is needed to make sure this happens





A really substantial fine is now urgently needed to discourage other landowners from similar actions. The council assure us they continue to plan to prosecute the breached Tree Protection Order, but it is important public demand for this is maintained.

It is vital the case is brought to a useful conclusion that enables landowners to see this kind of action, so irresponsible in a climate and biodiversity crisis, is met with really serious consequences.

- Helped campaigners for **Hatton Fields**, **Crayford Marshes** and the **Banbury Reservoir Park** who published survey results, visions and websites for new parks and nature reserves on these previously threatened sites.
- **Beddington Farmland** campaigners finally got commitments to enforce promised restoration of wetlands
- **Quaggy** campaigners helped Lewisham FC take over one of the disused sports fields
- We worked with Thames 21 to get **River Roding Edgelands** campaigners a large Heritage Lottery grant to develop a major proposal for river restoration
- **Gorne Wood** campaigners raised over £130,000 and moved towards planning for the compulsory purchase of their site

### Encouraging access to our countryside

- Launched **new green routes** and **blog pages** on website to encourage **exploration**
- Helped bring more than 2,000 Londoners to the **Urban Tree Festival** increasing **accessibility** of our countryside to **diverse groups**
- As part of **London Rivers Week**, arranged a nature day for families in Chinbrook Meadows, training on water quality testing on the River Roding, and a panel event on river restoration

### Case study

#### Inclusive cycle highlight of Urban Tree Festival

A glorious day set the scene for a wonderful three hour explore along the Ravensbourne river in May 2023, led by Leif Bersweden, the cycling botanist. Leif focused on common wildflowers where they were plentiful, so everyone could look. Most of the group needed adapted three wheel bikes provided by Wheels for Wellbeing, so allowing people to get close up to nature without dismounting was critical to success.



Leif helped the group appreciate the beauty of daisies, and examine buttercups and the amazingly shiny surface of their flowers. The area visited also had many English oak trees – one of Leif’s favourites! Oaks support an incredible 2,300 species.

The event was enthusiastically received by all attendees – none of

whom had been on a nature cycle before. There was clear enthusiasm for future events so this is something CPRE London will now explore. One participant said:

“Our Nature Cycle with CPRE London was fantastic! I thoroughly enjoyed it. I can't stop telling people about what I learnt. Leif really knows his stuff! I certainly would not have been able to have taken part if it was not for the accessible cycle element of the nature trail.”

## Influencing

- Produced an **election manifesto** and published **mayoral pledges** for candidates in 2024
- Gained record media **coverage**, including national TV, radio and press
- Reached new audiences through dozens of **social posts**
- Increased web traffic **by 28%**, mostly **new users**
- #NotJustAPrettyPlace used photos, quotes and statistics to highlight the value of the Green Belt. Our following on Twitter/X increased to **over 4,000 followers**
- Hosted three well attended lunchtime **webinars** on subjects including the Green Belt, London Parking Policy and the 2024 Mayoral Election

## Case study

### Creating a manifesto for change

In September we published a manifesto, ahead of London’s mayoral election. We asked the candidates to pledge support for

- 10 major new parks or nature reserves for London by 2030 – giving a new lease of life to large areas of neglected land
- 1,000 garden streets or street parks by 2030 in areas where residents don’t have enough green space
- Emergency construction of 357,000 rain garden for flood protection
- Reducing traffic in London by 50% by 2030
- Running a voluntary #LightsOut campaign to tackle damaging light pollution
- Identifying, by 2026, specific sites to deliver ambitious habitat creation targets and delivering this by 2030



## Working for a greener city

- Planting 1,000 hectares of new tree canopy cover by 2030. Achieve this by supporting the creation of a Tree Ring encircling the capital
- Opposing all developments that would result in loss of precious green space

Follow up discussions led to a mayoral debate on the environment in spring 2024, hosted and chaired by CPRE London on behalf of 20 environmental organisations in the capital.

## Campaigns

- CPRE London helped plant, restore or lay 1,207m of **hedgerows** through our hedgerow campaign in the year to end December 2023. Particular highlights included Kelly Avenue and South Croydon parks.
- Led the **healthy streets** project to challenge boroughs on six key measures shown to reduce car use and encourage active travel
- Launched our campaign to develop an **M25 of trees** around the capital
- Supported the CPRE **dark skies** campaign for 2023

## Case Study

### 'M25 of trees' campaign



In 2023 we launched our Tree Ring campaign. We aim to encircle London with an 'M25' of trees, combined with the greening of radial walking and cycling routes connecting the centre of town with this outer ring, and subroutes off these pushing right into the most green-deprived areas so everyone can be better connected to London's countryside. The outer ring will strengthen the Green Belt.

The vision captured imaginations and resulted in great media interest, including an interview on BBC Radio's World at One and coverage in the Guardian.

First steps include identifying potential planting sites with the support of community groups and local authority green space staff. These sites have now been adopted by Tree Ring Steering Group Partners including Trees for Cities, TCV and Woodland Trust to help drive forward action. We've also worked with GiGL to create a map of key opportunity areas including a line of connectivity around the capital connecting up existing woodland with key sites. We are sharing this with local authorities so that it can be built into local plans and climate and biodiversity strategies.





## Parks

- Grew our GoParksLondon project, supporting **100s of volunteer park friends** to defend and improve their local park
- Led five **walks** through London green and blue spaces
- Mobilised groups of **volunteers** to protect green spaces
- Nurtured new groups into being to bring our **10 new parks** closer to realisation
- Held six **training events** for friends groups

## Case study

### Building park support in east London



Green-fingered locals in east London are growing local food and socialising in a former laundry yard in a council housing estate, called the UP Garden. On top of a bike, scooter and buggy parking area there's now a green roof covered in thyme and mint plants at the perfect height for easy harvesting.

Across London, work by park friends groups has transformed formerly unloved places in local communities. Alongside tree planting, wildflower seeds, climbing plants and herb patches have been sown, and green roofs, planters and seats built.

East London boroughs comprise 33% of London population and 33% of parks on the GoParksLondon site, but only 22% of registered friends groups. We want to encourage the creation of at least 37 new friends groups in these areas by June 2026.

Over 2023 our GoParksLondon contacts list grew to 553. In our target areas, we have had 19 new group registrations – putting us on schedule on progress to this outcome. We've started working with groups in Havering, engaging with councils in Barking & Dagenham and Havering, and have created the Newham friends group forum.

We held five Go Parks events in 2023 walking through parks and along waterways and encouraging people to walk in and enjoy green spaces in east London – as well as Brent, Lewisham, and Sutton.

## Reports

- Published three hard-hitting reports on **threats to the Green Belt**, publicised through webinars
- Update our influential London **Parking Policy**
- Launched new guides on how to protect **food growing spaces** in London in partnership with Sustain/Capital Growth
- Supported the launch of the **Healthy Streets Scorecard Report**.





- Our Recycling study revealed that London had the **worst recycling rate** in England.

### Case study

#### Helping protect food growing sites

In a sprawling city, what rights do food growers have? How can we protect future work? And what can we do when a site is under threat?



In the autumn of 2023, CPRE London worked with Capital Growth to launch two brand-new guides on protecting food growing sites, and taking steps to defend a site already at risk.

The first guide, *Protecting a food growing site for the future*, focuses on preventative measures. It covers two main ways to protect a food growing space, including designating it as a protected area, and monitoring threats.

The second, *Saving a food growing site that is under threat*, helps communities respond if they are already at risk of losing access to their site, owing to a planning application for the land. It provides a range of actions under the headings of planning and legal, and political campaigning.

The two guides are written as practical ‘how to’ manuals for campaigners, and were free and easy to download.

#### What campaigners say

Messages from our local partners show why our work is so important:

‘It was fantastic to win our appeal (against development), and we thank CPRE for their timely help in supporting our battle. Our allotments are a place of sanctuary and community, where people come together to be amongst nature. We now hope to maintain the site in perpetuity.’

*Park Road Allotment Holders, Hounslow.*

*Ealing Matters*, a borough-wide alliance of more than 60 residents' associations and community groups, emailed: “Thank you very much on behalf of Ealing Matters for all the work you have put into your response on Ealing’s green spaces. It is very much appreciated.”

#### Staffing

#### Volunteers

By the end of 2023 volunteer time donated a week rose from around 75hrs to 116 hours - equivalent to having an additional full time person. The volunteer team work across HR, policy and advocacy, planning law, planning more generally, fundraising, events and communication – making an invaluable contribution to CPRE London’s capacity to further our environmental goals. The expansion on the



## Working for a greener city

planning side has included increased capacity to offer support on legal issues. We have a trained solicitor and barrister supporting us as volunteers.

In 2024 all current staff will play a role in helping increase the regular skilled volunteer contribution by half to at least 140 hours a week. We will focus growth on bringing specialist skills to the team.

### Future plans

**Three main areas of focus for 2024 are:**

#### **Greening the Green belt**

- Grow the environmental impact of the Green Belt through active greening, specifically promoting Green Belt woodland creation and wider landscape enhancement
- Increase understanding of the recreational, health and environmental benefits of protecting Green Belt
- Promote eco-friendliness of building on pre-developed rather than green sites, and encourage active travel
- In 2024 geographical focus will go to work in Hounslow, Enfield, Redbridge and Waltham Forest alongside boroughs of Bromley, Croydon and Hillingdon. Within these areas, we will prioritise low-income neighbourhoods.

#### **Ten New Parks**

- Grow awareness of problem of deliberately neglected areas of land, developing clear visions for each New Park site
- Build commitment from decision makers to maintain site protection. Secure commitment from at least one councillor, MP or London politician in relation to each site.
- Increase interest and excitement among decision makers about new park creation, through events such as webinars and harnessing the impetus of the More Natural Capital Coalition.

#### **London Friends of Green Space Network and GoParksLondon**

- Grow reach of friends movement including recruiting 50 new groups
- Increase capacity of friends groups by helping form two new borough forums for mutual support and promoting through social media
- Increase the impact of friends groups on public health by promoting park visiting
- In 2024 the focus will be on network reach in key target areas with poor access to green space

#### **Strengthening systems for supporting core casework**

- We will focus on reviewing local plans, to set out more sustainable patterns of development
- In broader casework, we will prioritise response to threats to Green Belt, Ten New Park sites, and Metropolitan Open Land. In particular, we will
  - Grow our Green Defenders network
  - Build capacity across the team to support local campaigners
  - Produce and promote report on state of London's green spaces



## Change of charitable status

In 2022 CPRE London registered as Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) entity, Charity number 1200094. As planned, the transition from an unincorporated charity to a CIO, and the transfer of our staff and assets, took effect from 1 January 2024.

It is planned to ensure all assets and liabilities from the previous unincorporated charity, number 802622, are fully dealt with and the closure registered with the Charity Commission by December 2024.

## Financial review

Total income in the year increased by 40% to £173,663 in 2023 (2022: £124,206). The diversity of funding sources means that the charity is not overly dependent upon one single income stream. At £40,285 (2022: £44,631) membership income remains the largest income stream and a key part of the fundraising mix given that this is unrestricted income.

Earned Income generated from the increasingly successful Urban Tree Festival totaled £2,710 and £5,200 (2022: £4,200) was earned in relation to the policy influencing activities of the More Natural Capital Coalition.

Grants and donations came to £123,255 and included grants from CPRE National for Hedgerow Heroes Programme £27,254, the crowdfunded Whitewebbs campaign £18,138, GLA funding of £17,460 for Greenbelt Woodland and Go Parks and new grants from Ecosia Foundation and NPT Transatlantic. The Big Give Christmas Challenge appeal raised £23,346 (2022: £11,640).

Total expenditure increased by 17% to £176,186 (2022: £150,799). Core office costs and staff and volunteer costs accounted for £7,143 of the increase, with the balance relating to project costs. Overall, a small deficit arose in the year £2,523 (2022: deficit £26,593).

Net assets at the end of the year stood at £95,743 (2022: £98,266).

Unrestricted funds are well above the minimum level of four months' running costs, ensuring the year-end position of the charity is strong enough to continue its operation.

## Reserves policy

The current policy is to maintain the unrestricted reserve above a minimum level of four months' running costs. The Trustees reviewed this policy January 2024 with a view to potentially increasing this minimum level to six months' reserve. There has been no formal change to the reserves policy following this review.

The level of unrestricted reserves on 31 December 2023 stood at £64,281 (2022: £60,026). The Trustees feel that this level of unrestricted reserves is appropriate to provide a prudent cushion against economic uncertainty and unexpected fluctuations in income but is not excessive.



## Structure, governance and management

CPRE London is governed by a Board of Trustees who meet up five times a year, including at an 'away-day' for strategic planning and play a key role in risk management, including having oversight of the charity's risk register.

At the AGM in June 2023, three Honorary Officers and four General Trustees, were re-elected to the Board. In the autumn of 2023, an open recruitment process took place and four co-optees joined the Trustee Board, to fill skills gaps in areas such as finance, education, and energy. Annual nominations for trustees will be considered at the AGM in May 2024.

The staff team comprises four part-time members: Tim Fountaine (Office and Accounts Administrator, 0.2 FTE); Alice Roberts (Head of Campaigns, 0.6FTE); John Sadler (Campaigns Officer, 0.6FTE); and Anna Taylor (Director, 0.6FTE). Laura Collins continued to provide network development support as a freelancer to the GoParks London project.

We are hugely grateful, as ever, to all our staff, freelancer, volunteers, trustees and all our donors and supporters for their commitment and hard work, as well as to our landlord Alan Baxter for his in-kind support. Particular thanks are given to Tim Fountaine, who retired in December 2023.

*If you would like further information about any of the matters covered in this report or would like to become more involved in our work, please contact us at [office@cprelondon.co.uk](mailto:office@cprelondon.co.uk)*

Tony Burton, Chair on behalf of the CPRE London Trustee Board  
May 2024

Approved by the trustees for issue on ..... and signed on their behalf by

.....  
Tony Burton, Chair, CPRE London





## Independent Examiners' Report

Report of the Independent Examiner to the Trustees of 'Campaign to Protect Rural England',  
London Branch

**For the year ended 31 December 2023**

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We report on the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 which disclose a deficit of £2,523.

### **Respective responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and Independent Examiner**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. It is our responsibility to form an independent opinion, based on our work, on those statements and to report our opinion to you.

### **Basis of Independent Examiner's Report**

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, seeking explanations from the Board of Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on the view given by these accounts.

### **Independent Examiners Statement**

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our attention which gives us a reasonable cause to believe that in any material aspects the requirements to keep the accounting records in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act have not been met or to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed by J A Brookfield, as senior statutory auditor  
on behalf of Brookfield & Co Chartered Accountants  
Registered auditors  
18 Concanon Rd  
London  
SW2 5TA

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Income and Expenditure (£)	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Total 2022	Notes
<b>INCOME</b>					
Membership income	40 285		40 285	44 631	Note 1
Earned income	2 710	5 200	7 910	5 950	Note 2
Grant income for projects	0	88 801	88 801	55 570	Note 3
Donations and branch appeals	26 190	8 264	34 454	15 598	Note 4
Legacies and bequests	0			986	
Gift Aid	1 554		1 554	1 254	Note 5
Bank interest	659		659	217	
<b>Total income</b>	<b>71 398</b>	<b>102 265</b>	<b>173 663</b>	<b>124 206</b>	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Salary costs	41 579	34 362	75 941	73 573	Note 6
Rent	10 680		10 680	7 110	
Office expenses and sundry	3 821		3 821	2 326	
Projects and events	1 782	80 704	82 486	64 242	Note 7
Subscriptions	25		25	25	
Insurance	850		850	1 081	
Professional fees	990		990	80	
Governance	1 317		1 317	2 250	
Bank charges	76		76	112	
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>61 120</b>	<b>115 066</b>	<b>176 186</b>	<b>150 799</b>	
<b>Surplus /deficit</b>	<b>10 278</b>	<b>-12 801</b>	<b>-2 523</b>	<b>-26 593</b>	



## BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Balance Sheet (£)	2023	2022	Notes
<b>Current assets</b>			
Current account	45 755	39 494	
Petty cash	60	14	
Reserve account	47 171	46 590	
Accounts receivable	4 049	16 270	
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>97 035</b>	<b>102 368</b>	
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Accounts payable	0	0	
Other payables	1 292	4 102	
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>1 292</b>	<b>4 102</b>	
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>95 743</b>	<b>98 266</b>	
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Funds brought forward	98 266	124 859	
Surplus/Deficit for year	-2 523	-26 593	
<b>Total capital and reserves</b>	<b>95 743</b>	<b>98 266</b>	
of which restricted funds	31 462	38 240	Note 8
unrestricted funds	64 281	60 026	



## Notes

### Note 1

Membership income includes regional subscriptions of £4,062 and branch subscriptions of £36,223.

### Note 2

Earned income arose from the Coalition Manifesto for a More Natural Capital £5,200 and Urban Tree Festival £2,710.

### Note 3

Grant income included:

GLA grant of £17,460 to finance Green Belt Woodland project and Go Parks

CPRE National grant of £27,255 to finance Hedgerow Heroes

NPT Transatlantic grant of £7,000 to fund Ten New Parks and Greening the Belt

Ecosia Foundation grant of £8,547 to support Ten New Parks.

Foundation for Integrated Transport funded £2,431 for Healthy Streets and other miscellaneous amounts of £7,970.

We raised £18,138 from a crowdfunder for the Whitewebbs case.

### Note 4

We raised £23,346 through the Big Give Christmas Challenge appeal and £11,108 from other donations.

### Note 5

Gift aid received from HMRC on donations from project and coalition partners, and other donors and supporters of £1,554.

### Note 6

Salary costs have been allocated between restricted and unrestricted expenditure to reflect time spent on restricted fund projects. Forty-five percent of staff salaries is paid from restricted funds.

### Note 7

Expenditure on projects and events excluding staff salaries include:

£22,780 on GoParks London, £17,757 on the Urban Tree Festival, £7,350 on Greener London Planting, £14,798 on Greenbelt Woodland Project, £6,127 on Landscape gardening for Hedgerow Heros and costs on other projects including Whitewebbs of £13,674.





**Note 8**

Restricted funds of £31,462 not spent will be carried forward for expenditure on the projects to which they relate during 2024.

<b>Total Funds (£)</b>	<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>Incoming resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended incl salaries</b>	<b>Transfers from unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Closing Balance</b>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
More Natural Capital Manifesto	153	5 200	5 200		153
GoParks London	9 124	7 633	22 780	6 023	0
Parking Project	3 000	0	3 000		0
Urban Tree Festival	9 283	12 815	18 757		3 341
Healthy Streets	0	2 431	1 832		599
Green Belt Woodland	12 747	12 462	25 200		9
Greener London Planting	3 933	5 785	7 350		2 368
Whitewebbs		18 138	9 480		8 658
Ten New Parks		10 547	10 547		0
Hedgerow Heros		27 254	10 920		16 334
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>38 240</b>	<b>102 265</b>	<b>115 066</b>	<b>6 023</b>	<b>31 462</b>
Unrestricted funds	60 026	71 398	61 120	-6 023	64 281
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>98 266</b>	<b>173 663</b>	<b>176 186</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>95 743</b>