



The countryside charity
Shropshire

Charles Green

CPRE Shropshire “Hedgerow Heroes”

**Nature Recovery: Town and Parish Councils Conference
6th December 2024**

What and who are CPRE?

- CPRE is the Campaign to Protect Rural England - The Countryside Charity
- Standing up for the countryside for nearly 100 years nationally and for over 75 years in Shropshire (run by volunteers and one paid part-time Branch Manager)
- Interface of the environment, nature, the countryside, communities, farming and planning, using evidence to punch above our weight.
- Much time on planning and the planning system - trying to prevent undesirable development in the countryside. Our precious Green Belt, Shropshire Hills National Landscape and green fields are under increasing threat from Local Plans and Government policy, i.e. from unsustainable growth, at odds with climate emergency and ecological emergency
- Liaise and work with many other organisations, many of whom represented here today
- Leaflet explains more
- Hedgerow Heroes project ticks so many of these boxes



CPRE The countryside charity
Shropshire

The Shropshire Landscape you cherish is disappearing fast

Shropshire is an astonishingly beautiful and varied county, with its complex geology and landscapes, green fields, ancient woodlands, meres, mosses, fertile plains and rolling hills. Many of us deeply cherish it. Yet every year, irreplaceable countryside is damaged or lost forever.

Our precious Green Belt, Shropshire Hills National Landscape and green fields are under threat as up to 31,300 new homes are planned for Shropshire between 2016 and 2038 and a further 20,200 for Telford & Wrekin between 2020 and 2040. Labour's new rules may require even more house building than that.

Labour's new rules may require even more house building than that.

We really need your help to protect our local countryside—and the nation's—from this and other serious threats from inappropriate development.

CPRE Shropshire believes in the right housing in the right places, which means brownfield first rather than greenfield, and much more affordable housing, and that productive farmland should be prioritised for growing food.

“Standing up for the Shropshire countryside”

www.cpreshropshire.org.uk

You can help us!

Join us!

By joining CPRE, you are helping to ensure that a beautiful living countryside thrives for generations to come.

We all need the countryside, whether it's for fresh air, sport and leisure, delicious local produce, beautiful landscapes, or vibrant towns and villages. The countryside is invaluable.

CPRE membership costs just £5 per month. Join us now online here: www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/join-us or scan in the QR code below

Volunteer with us!

We need people to help in any way they can, for instance by monitoring local planning applications (particularly in the Shrewsbury, Telford & Wrekin and North Shropshire areas), by taking our message out to Shropshire events and shows, and, of course, by taking part in our Hedgerow project.

Contact us!

Sarah Jameson, Branch Manager
admin@cpreshropshire.org.uk
01547 528546

What does CPRE Shropshire do?

CPRE Shropshire is the county branch of the national campaigning charity, CPRE. We exist to promote the beauty, tranquility and communities of the county and aim to ensure the countryside is protected for now and future generations. We stand up for the countryside and are trusted through using evidence, knowledge and experience to influence positive change – we are known for punching above our weight!

CPRE Shropshire is run entirely by volunteers, with only one paid part-time Branch Manager

Our six districts, based on the pre-Unitary District Council areas, also enable us to concentrate on very local issues.

As well as our vanguard Hedgerow project, much time is spent responding to planning matters that we feel threaten the Shropshire landscape. We also offer advice and guidance to members of the public concerned about inappropriate planning applications local to them.

We liaise closely with other agencies where appropriate, eg Shropshire Hills National Landscape, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Civic Societies and the National Trust.

We also support Parish Councils and other amenity groups in Shropshire to address local problems.

Hedgerow project

Since 2020, CPRE Shropshire has been running a hedgerow project and so far we have planted 18km of new native hedgerow in the Shropshire landscape with the help of volunteers. We have run courses in the traditional land skills of hedgelaying and coppice management which help enhance our countryside and provide an essential home – and corridor – for our wildlife.

CPRE Shropshire Hedgerow Heroes project



The countryside charity
Shropshire



www.cpreshropshire.org.uk



The countryside charity
Shropshire

What is the Hedgerow Heroes project?

- CPRE Shropshire's Hedgerow project has been running for 4 years
- Part of a national CPRE "Hedgerow Heroes" initiative
- Main objective is hedge creation in the countryside
- Very much a "boots on the ground" project
- Leaflet explains more



The countryside charity
Shropshire

Join in with CPRE Shropshire's Hedgerow Heroes project!

CPRE Shropshire's Hedgerow Heroes project has funding for another year.

This year, we aim to plant 4km+ of new native mixed species hedgerow in the county and run more of our popular beginners' hedgelaying and coppice management workshops. We will run more arts/creativity workshops and (new for this year) training sessions on biochar production.

Inside is further information about CPRE Shropshire and opportunities within the hedgerow project for landowners and volunteers.

Do think about joining us as a member; we have been standing up for the Shropshire countryside for over 70 years and nationally CPRE has been campaigning for hedgerow protection for nearly a century!



Sign up for our Hedge Bulletin to keep up to date with hedge project news at www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/hedgerow-project or email for information at admin@cpreshropshire.org.uk

...or try your hand at basic hedgelaying, coppice management or biochar production

We have given basic training in hedgelaying to around 200 people in a series of popular introductory two-day workshops since 2021.

We will be running further workshops this winter in basic hedgelaying as well as coppice management and biochar production. We will run our hedgerow arts workshops once more led by a local artist. We hope you will take part!

Sign up now to take part!

Sign up to our mailing list today at www.cpreshropshire.org.uk to get updates and news on the hedge project and planting/training opportunities as they arise through the year. We look forward to seeing you!




www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/hedgerow-project
Email: admin@cpreshropshire.org.uk



The countryside charity
Shropshire

Can you help us plant hedges this winter?

CPRE Shropshire is seeking volunteers to help plant new mixed (native) species hedgerows this winter as part of Phase 4 of our hedgerow project.

A great opportunity to do something positive for our environment, help provide vital wildlife corridors for nature and enjoy the outdoors as well as meeting like-minded people in the lovely Shropshire countryside.

Volunteers are welcome to take part in one or more planting days. We will show you what to do if you are a beginner. All planting days and sites will be put up on our website later in the year at cpreshropshire.org.uk

Are you a landowner or farmer?

If you are a landowner/farmer wanting to plant/gap up a hedgerow, perhaps reinstating an old hedgeline or connecting up habitat, please contact us. We will need more information about the site and will pay you a visit (some criteria apply). All hedges are created with volunteer help and hedge whips/guards (where needed) are provided free.



Join us!

Go to cpreshropshire.org.uk/join-us to join up.

CPRE, the countryside charity has long campaigned for healthy hedgerows.

Why not join us and stand up for Shropshire's glorious countryside? Or volunteer with us?

Membership costs just £5/month and you can sign up quickly and easily via our website at www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/join-us

Your membership helps us ensure we can continue our work and gives you:

- Local and national membership of CPRE
- A role in protecting the countryside
- Shropshire Voice, our Branch newsletter and occasional email updates
- Countryside Voice, CPRE national magazine

Photo credits: (front page, right): Youngwolders; (back page) Richard Clarke, Really Rural; others: Sarah Jameson



 The countryside charity
Shropshire



The countryside charity
Shropshire

Why a hedgerow project?

- We have lost 50 percent of hedgerows in England since the second world war
- Many surviving hedgerows are now in poor condition (over/under-managed), so will deteriorate and die over time
- Poorly managed hedgerows are not useful for biodiversity - or for the landowner



Redlake Valley on a misty morning



The countryside charity
Shropshire

What can healthy hedgerows do for us?

- Fantastic habitat for nature
- Shelter for birds – nests
- Food and foraging for insects, birds, mammals – leaves, blossom, fruits, nuts
- Safe corridor for wildlife to move through the landscape – eg dormice, bats, pine martens etc
- Flood mitigation – esp cross slope – roots
- Shelter for livestock – shade in summer/ against wind and rain in spring (eg young lambs)



Huge deep hedgerow at Minsterley Meadows



The countryside charity
Shropshire

What does a healthy hedge look like?

- Big
- A bit messy!
- Bushy
- Dense at base
- Long, grassy margins
- Ideally multiple species – Hazel, Hawthorn, Blackthorn plus plants such as Field Maple, Holly and fruiting trees like Crab Apple, Wild Plum & shrubs (Dog Rose, Spindle)
- Plus hedgerow trees!



Hedgerow on a regenerative farm, near Whitchurch



The countryside charity
Shropshire

Hedgerow lifecycle

Hedgerows are a man-made habitat and generally need management to keep them healthy. This can mean:

Hedge trimming (ideally incrementally/on 3 year rotation)

Or rejuvenating over time by:

- Hedgelaying (see picture)
- And/or coppicing (cut down to ground and allowed to resprout – can look harsh!)



Partly-laid hedgerow at Admaston, Telford
halfway through a hedgelaying workshop



The countrys
Shropshire

So, what has CPRE Shropshire been doing?

- Over 3 years we have planted around 18km of new, mixed species, locally sourced, hedge whips into the Shropshire countryside.
- We plan to plant a further 4km+ this winter in the county
- All our planting is done with the help of our fantastic volunteers
- Only use guards if rabbits on site to cut down on plastic



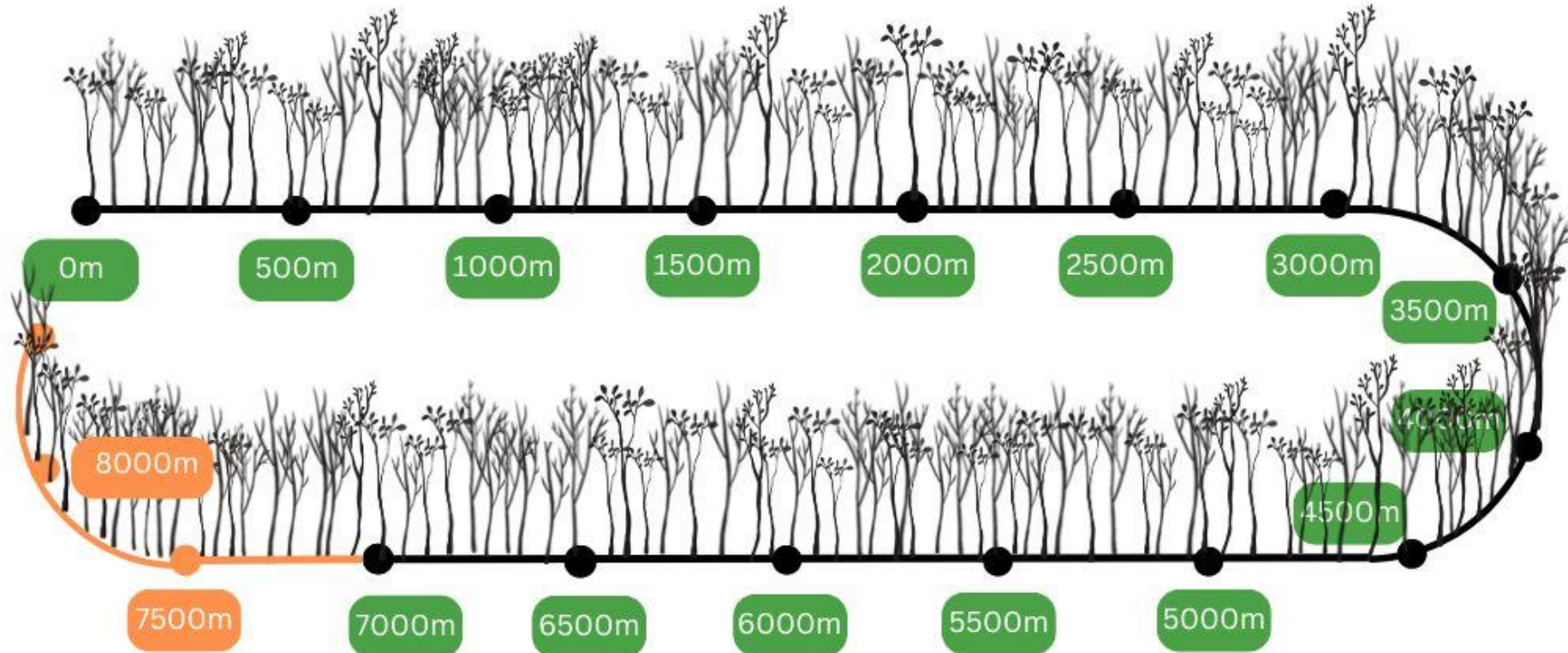
Volunteers after a morning's planting at Pollardine Farm in January – some of them from Severn Trent Water doing corporate volunteering.



The countryside charity
Shropshire

- Final “Hedge-o-Meter” for the 2023/24 season (phase 3)
- Over 8km of hedgerow planted last winter
- Variety of sites – working farms, smallholdings, a flower farm, a wildlife rescue centre, community playing fields.
- We have also planted on allotments and churchyards

Total metres of hedgerow planted for 2023/24 at
7th March 2024: **8085m**





The countryside charity
Shropshire

Training & Workshops

In addition to hedge creation in 4 years we have

- Run 23 x 2-day beginner workshops on traditional hedgelaying
- 5 x coppicing workshops
- 4 x hedgerow management workshops for farmers/landowners

3 ladies getting to grips with hedgelaying at one of our workshops last November at Pennerley (photo: Really Rural Ltd)





The countryside charity
Shropshire

In addition to hedge creation,
we have also run:

- 2 hedgerow surveying workshops
- 7 hedgerow arts workshops
- A number of hedge walks and talks on everything from foraging to folklore and field names!



Megan Gimber, People's Trust for
Endangered Species, leading a hedge
surveying workshop at High Leasowes,
Church Stretton

We have been making films!

We have made a number of hedge-related films (see them on CPRE Shropshire's YouTube channel). The latest film "The Hedgelayer" has had 65k views in 7 months.

"A beautiful dedication to the profession of hedge-laying"

the HEDGELAYER



The countryside charity
Shropshire



The countryside charity
Shropshire

Collaboration

Over the 4 years, we have collaborated with a number of other environmental organisations:

- Shropshire Wildlife Trust
- Middle Marches Community Land Trust
- Land, Life & Livelihoods
- Severn Rivers Trust
- Tree Council
- National Trust Stepping Stones project
- Shropshire Hills AONB (now National Landscape)
- Young Wilders



Nigel Adams – hedge management workshop, Admaston Farm, Telford



The countryside charity
Shropshire

Interested in joining in?

- Plenty of opportunities to join in with the Hedgerow Heroes project this year.
- Training workshops are over for this season but we will need lots of help to get hedges planted this winter.
- Plantings have already started but over two dozen sites left, running to late February 2025
- Sign up to the Hedge Bulletin via cpreshropshire.org.uk for updates!





The countryside charity
Shropshire

More information:
[www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/
hedgerow-project](http://www.cpreshropshire.org.uk/hedgerow-project)