

# Highgate Society

20 May 2024



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London

Working for a greener city



1. Pre-empting threats (Part 1): breaking the cycle of decline
2. Pre-empting threats (Part 2): 'red flag' land
3. Fighting threats
4. Making the case for Green Belt: Compact City (sustainable patterns of development)
5. Grey to Green

# 1. Breaking the cycle of decline



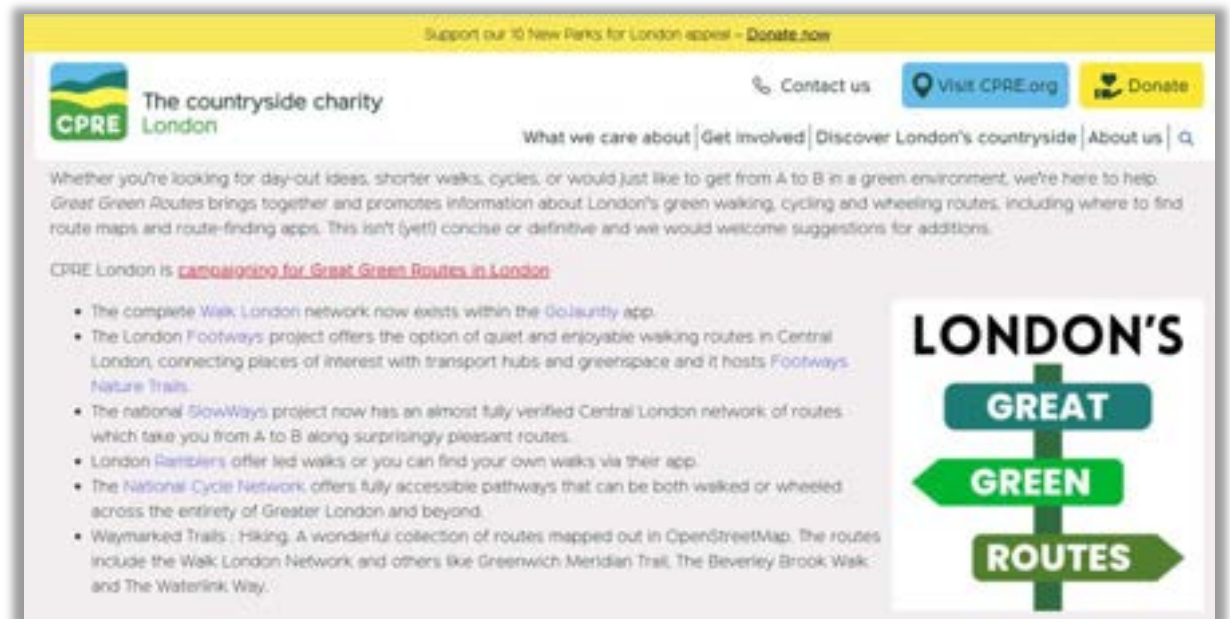
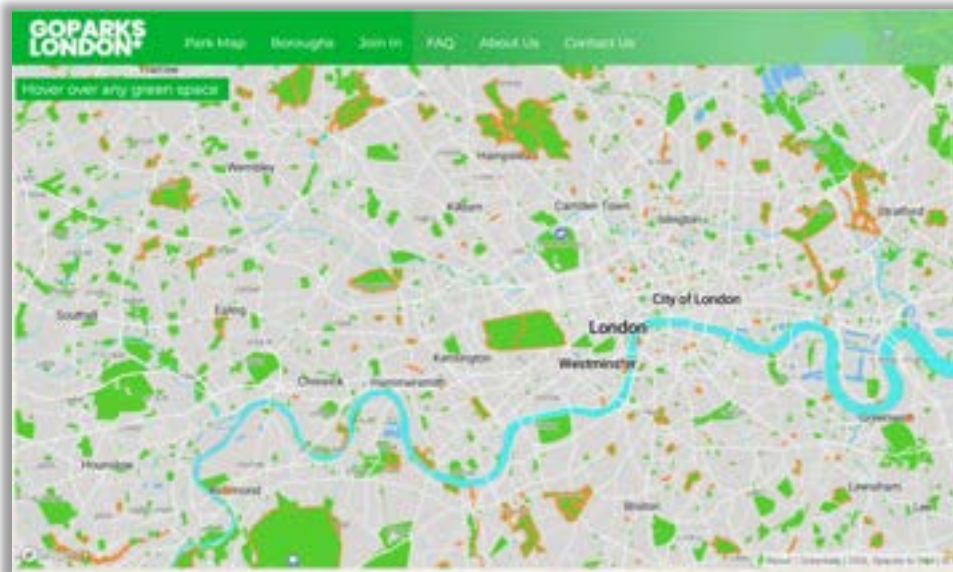
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- Promoting parks; and supporting / growing the Park Friends Groups movement (through our GoParksLondon project)
- Green spaces as '*Great Green Routes*'
- Directly helping improve public parks and greenspaces (e.g. Hedgerow Heroes)



# Hegderow Heroes

- 2,754m of hedgerow newly planted or restored
- New hedgerows in 29 parks
- Involved around 1250 people - including lots of children!
- Worked with 6 schools, including 2 special educational needs schools



## 2. 'Red flag' sites



- Protected green sites (Metropolitan Open Land or Green Belt)
- BUT... derelict, neglected or no clear identity.





Development  
Site





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# TEN NEW PARKS FOR LONDON



# Beddington Farmlands +



c400 ha or c1,000 acres  
equals

Wimbledon Common or  
3x Hyde Park



London's next.....



Escape to nature  
London wetland centre









Derelict and/or fenced off green s...

54 views

Last edit was on April 18

Add layer Share Preview

Untitled layer

Individual styles

Field - MOL status and cover...

Field, fenced off, out of use

Field, fenced off, out of use

Field, fenced off, out of use

Beckton Alps, fenced off, ou...

Field - no known identity

Sports ground, fenced off, ou...

Field, fenced off, out of use

Field, out of use (though no...

Land behind Arkley Golf Club...

Series of fields, look to be ou...

Old golf course, out of use, f...

Avery Hill site

Former sports ground? Derel...

Disused / derelict looking fiel...

Interesting site?

'Beckton Alps, fenced off, out of use

51.51916, 0.06115



# London Mayor's habitat creation targets

• Species rich woodland	20 ha by 2025	200 ha by 2050
• Flower rich grassland	50 ha by 2025	250 ha by 2050
• Rivers and streams	10 km by 2025	40km by 2050
• Reedbeds	5 ha by 2025	30 ha by 2050



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# 3. Threats to green spaces



- Casework – ongoing (including Local Plan work)
- *Green Defenders* report and new network / newsletter
- Campaigning & planning advice
- Green Belt info & promotion
- Legal...



## 4. Making the case for Green Belt



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# London's Green Belt: our climate safety belt

Our Green Belt protects us from floods and high temperatures and is a place for nature, leisure and local food production. It promotes regeneration of rundown areas and the development



I'M NOT JUST A PRETTY PLACE...

I am the Green Belt &  
I Protect your Water Supply



Rain that falls on the Green Belt is filtered through soil & bedrock to replenish underground reservoirs, but rain that falls on hard surfaces evaporates quickly



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Green belt  
Grey belt  
Golf belt



The real 'grey belt'  
Finding space to build in London and beyond



Think building on Green Belt will  
solve London's housing crisis?  
Think again...



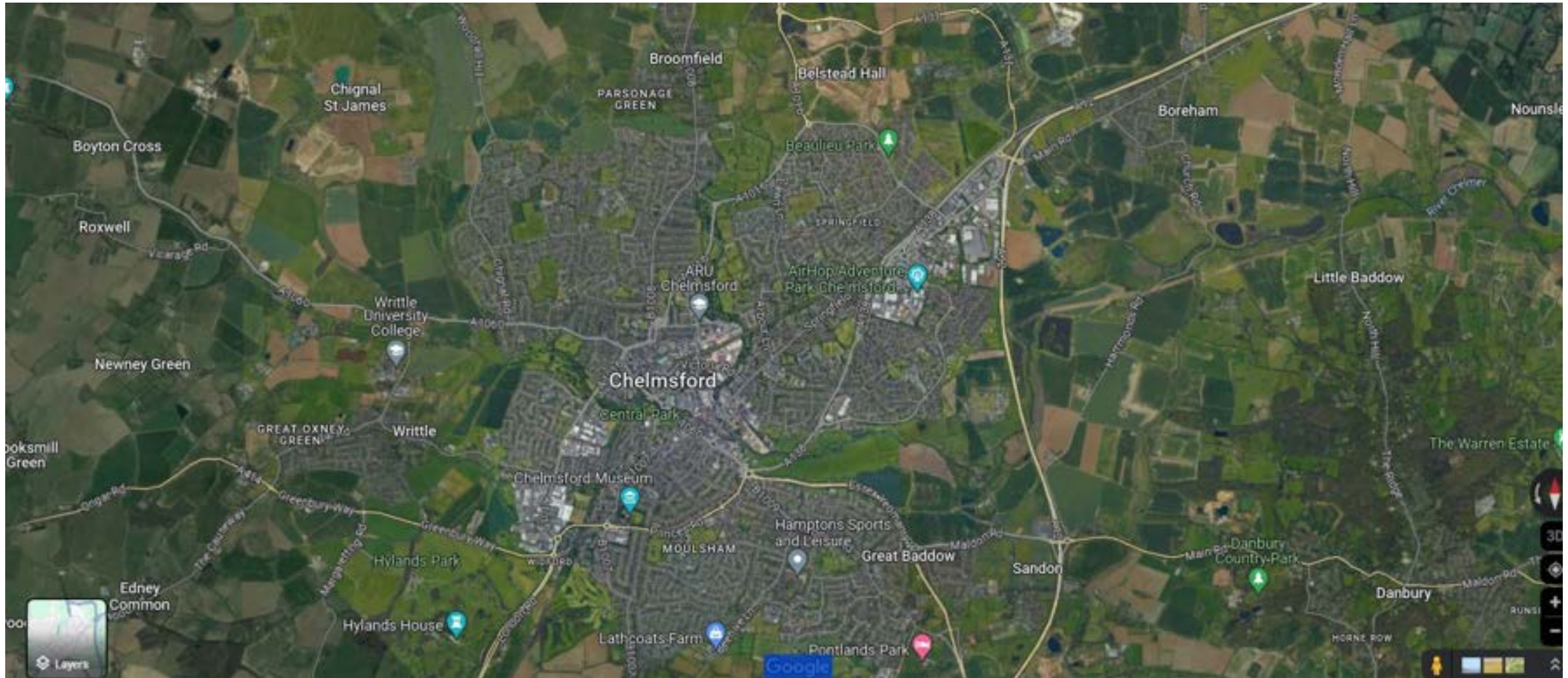
Protecting space for sports  
The 'golf belt' myth and London's remaining  
playing fields



Some of the members  
of Lewisham Football Club



Green field development in Chelmsford: it should be easy to get around on cycle or by bus...





.. And Chelmsford has lots of brownfield / underutilised space - surface car parks, which are linked to car-dependent planning (and related impacts) ...





... and yet it has seen loss of productive land for development (this site is now built out)





... to lock-in a high-carbon, car-dependent future.





**Density is key** e.g. bus services become financially viable with densities over 60 dwellings per hectare (dph) though good use of space would mean higher densities, upwards of 100dph.

These two examples show two areas:  
**25** dwellings per hectare and **69** dwellings per hectare

Examples from:  
<https://windmz.dartford.gov.uk/media/20180606320100Housing%20Density%20Paper%202018.pdf>

The final existing area is in Wilmington ward, with the first housing site example to the south of the A2 on Whitehead Close, Barn End Lane, Gerdview Drive, Rowlatt Road, Rowlatt Close and Stock Lane. Average house price value on Whitehead Close is £366,000.



- Fact File:**
- Site area: 3.15ha
  - Residual Site Area: 3.11ha
  - Homes: 79
  - Density: 25dph
  - Main housing type: semi-detached and detached
  - Community facility

This site area is primarily made up of 3/4 bed semi-detached and detached properties. Houses and gardens are larger in size than previous case studies and others in the rural area.

- Fact File:**
- Site area: 3.269ha
  - Employment/Community Space: 0.13ha
  - Residual Site Area: 3.13ha
  - Homes: 215
  - Density: 69dph
  - Main housing type: Terraced
  - 16 Lock-up garages
- This site is primarily made up of 2 and 3 bed terraced streets, with the average size of a 2 bed terrace on Church Road being 57m<sup>2</sup>.
- The site exceeds the CS guide of 35-55 dwellings/ha for other urban areas at 69dph.
- Further terraces surround the area highlighted, along with Ebbsfleet Central site and station to the east, and a recreation ground and cemetery to the west.



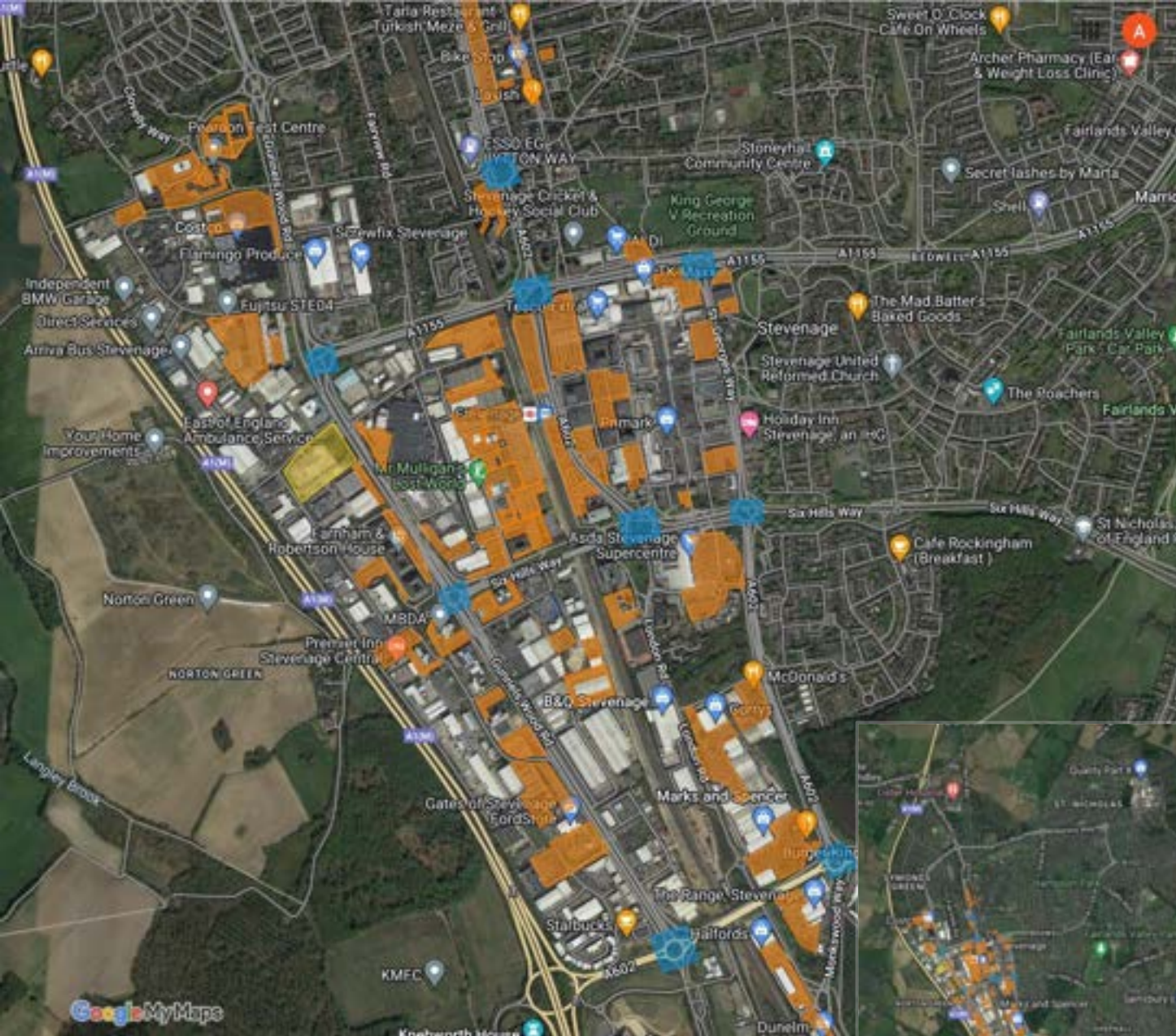


100 dwellings  
per hectare

Key number:  
financial  
viability of  
public  
transport







## Stevenage's surface car parks (orange) and roundabouts (blue)

The town was built with cycle infrastructure and it takes 15 minutes to cycle from the centre to the outer edge. But active travel is discouraged by overprovision of parking. These spaces should accommodate car-free or car-lite housing or mixed-use development instead.



Image: Roads Were Not Built For Cars | Where driving is easy, Brits drive



# Transport is at the heart of urban land-use planning: if you plan for cars, you get cars

## Compact cities with Green Belt

High density

Fewer than 30 cars per 100 households

Low carbon

**Public transport financially viable**

Active (healthy) lifestyles

## Urban Sprawl

Low density

More than 50 cars per 100 households

High carbon

**Car dependent**

Inactive (less healthy) lifestyles





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**Parklets.** Parking spaces can be used for community seating or flower beds





**Green infrastructure / sustainable urban drainage.**  
Parking spaces can be replaced with much-needed 'rain gardens' aka Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, like this one in Hackney (the image to the right shows the same space when it still had parking).





## **Streetparks.**

Some boroughs have even removed parking and traffic from streets to create whole new parks, like this one in Camden.

Find out more about our work promoting [Streetparks](#).







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# 10 ways to **Get involved**

[office@cprelondon.org.uk](mailto:office@cprelondon.org.uk)

## Events



CPRE London AGM -  
6pm Thursday 16 May  
2024



Urban Tree Festival 11-19  
May 2024 - various  
events



London Rivers Week 22-  
30 June 2024 - various  
events



## Become a member



### Join us

Becoming a member is the best way to support a beautiful, thriving countryside for all. We put your money to good use, collaborating with communities and holding government to account for positive change and a sustainable countryside.

You can be a part of the movement by giving as little as £3.

[Join us](#)

## Leave a lasting legacy

