



The countryside charity
Oxfordshire

Campaigning to protect our rural county

Green Defender Volunteer Role

Background

CPRE is England's leading countryside charity. We fight for a better future for the English Countryside. We work both locally and nationally to protect, shape and enhance our beautiful, thriving countryside for everyone to value and enjoy.

Campaigning throughout England is carried out by county-based branches and local district groups, which aim to influence decision making on a range of environmental and land-use issues. We at the CPRE Oxfordshire Branch are supported by five District Committees, which broadly coincide with local authority areas. The charity is largely operated by volunteers, with a very small number of part time supporting staff.

The Role

We are setting up a new 'Green Defenders Network' which will establish a network of volunteers across Oxfordshire who can champion the countryside in local planning decisions. As a volunteer you will be given the training and support needed to enable you to respond constructively to local planning applications and to engage in Local Plan consultations. By being part of a team, you will be able to share information and experience and form a strong, practical advocacy network for the countryside.

Key tasks where we hope you can help, with support, include:

- Investigating planning applications with an impact on Oxfordshire's green spaces.
- Preparing and submitting responses to influence the outcome of planning applications and appeals.
- Visiting proposed development sites to look at plans and record details.
- Liaising with parish and district councils and other conservation bodies.
- Seeking to influence local and neighbourhood plans.

What we need from you:

You will be home-based, carrying out activities around your other commitments and attending occasional meetings.

You will have the opportunity to play a key role in a respected local environmental organisation, applying your skills and experience to make a real difference and becoming part of a friendly and passionate group.

No particular knowledge or qualifications are required, as we are happy to provide training and support. However, ideally you will have at least good organisational and 'people' skills, and an interest in/knowledge of environmental, countryside and/or planning issues. Someone with an eye for detail and an interest in investigative work would be a great asset in this role. A good knowledge of your local area would also be useful, but not essential. You will also need to be computer literate. This is open to anyone over 18, and as younger members of our community are currently underrepresented in our volunteer base, we would be delighted to receive applications from the younger end of the scale.

As a guide, we anticipate this voluntary role will take an average of two hours per week and attendance at approximately one meeting every three months.

What's in it for you?

CPRE volunteers are motivated to help for a range of reasons, but normally they have a strong interest in protecting and enhancing the environment, as well as encouraging people to enjoy the countryside and all it has to offer.

Benefits include:

- A great opportunity to use your existing experience and to develop new skills.
- Working with others to make a difference both locally and nationally.
- The potential to meet and discuss issues with a wide range of like-minded people.
- Opportunities to attend local and national CPRE activities, events and workshops.
- A great addition to any CV, and references can be included.

The role is voluntary although, with prior agreement, we will pay out-of-pocket expenses, in line with our Volunteers Policy.

If you are interested in joining our team, please get in touch any way you like email: lyndam@cpreoxon.org.uk or call the office on 01491612079.

The English countryside is wonderful - help us look after it by championing the countryside in planning decisions.