



PRESS RELEASE

Date: **6 December 2023**

For immediate use

Remarkable achievement of 100 years of rural community action celebrated at Cambridge reception

*Event at King's College Cambridge brings together rural communities to mark the start of
Cambridgeshire ACRE's 100 year anniversary*

King's College Cambridge was the backdrop for a celebration to kick off the centenary year of a well-known Cambridgeshire-based charity that champions rural action and support.

Cambridgeshire ACRE (Action for Communities in Rural England) will celebrate 100 years of making a grassroots difference working with rural communities in 2024.

Founded in 1924, the charity has helped inject an estimated £75 million worth of investment into rural Cambridgeshire during its 100-year history. The launch event at Kings College saw key community leaders come together to reflect on 100 years of Cambridgeshire ACRE's work and to thank to those volunteers who have made such a difference to their rural communities.

King's College generously sponsored the event as it was within the College, during the 1920s, that initial discussions took place regarding the plight of the local countryside and where the idea to establish Cambridgeshire ACRE was first proposed.

The reception was hosted by the organisation's President, Mrs Julie Spence OBE QPM, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire. Mrs Spence commented:

"During these centenary celebrations I am honoured to continue the long-held association the Lieutenancy has with Cambridgeshire ACRE by acting as its President. From a small acorn and those early ideals, Cambridgeshire ACRE has grown into a substantial oak tree, with many

branches proudly representing the significant voluntary and community sector infrastructure we have in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough today.

Cambridgeshire ACRE's role, as an advocate for rural communities, is just as relevant today as it was when it was first founded. If we look back over our 100 years, we see many of the same challenges recurring now for our rural residents - such as cost-of-living crisis, housing shortages and rural isolation - but we now we have an established voluntary sector on our side, supported by a deeply committed team at Cambridgeshire ACRE who work closely with rural communities."

Cambridgeshire ACRE's Chairperson, Annie Blair, reflected on the reasons for the organisation's success over the last 100 years and said:

"Our success is down to the organisation's agility, our leadership and collaboration with others, the expertise and quality of our staff and the many volunteers who we support across the county who make such a difference in their own rural communities. "

Cambridgeshire ACRE plans to use its Centenary as an opportunity to tell the charity's fascinating story and celebrate the remarkable achievement of 100 years. A series of events will set the stage for the future, as the charity continues to support Cambridgeshire's rural communities with the present day challenges they face.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. About the Centenary Press Pack

This press release is part of a press pack that contains further information:

- Press Launch Leaflet with foreword by the President of Cambridgeshire ACRE, the Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire
- Longer news article for newspaper and magazine publication
- Photos from the launch event

2. Further comment

Immediate comment can be sought from the organisation's Chief Executive, Kirsten Bennett, on 07805 383208.

The wider Cambridgeshire ACRE team and representatives from Cambridgeshire communities who have worked alongside the charity who can speak about the impact of its work are available to speak with the press. To request interviews, please contact chantalpalmer@keystone-marketing.co.uk or call 01480 278750.