



Campaign to Protect
Rural England

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For immediate release

St George's Day is a Time to Celebrate Icons of the English Landscape, Say CPRE

As preparations are made to celebrate our national saint's day, a new book, *Icons of England*, published on St George's Day and edited by CPRE President Bill Bryson, highlights many of the most cherished places and intriguing features the English countryside has to offer.

Icons of England is an eclectic collection of essays on what lies at the heart of being English and England's landscape. The book features contributions from a cast of over 80 personalities who write fondly of their corner of the country or aspect of English life that they most hold dear. Contributors include; Michael Palin, Eric Clapton, Rick Stein, Bryan Ferry, Sebastian Faulks, Kate Adie, Kevin Spacey, Jo Brand, Richard Mabey, Simon Jenkins, John Sergeant, Benjamin Zephaniah, Joan Bakewell, Antony Beevor, Libby Purves, Jonathan Dimbleby, and many more: along with a preface by HRH The Prince of Wales.

Comments from *Icons of England*:

Bill Bryson: "A number of qualities, I think, set English icons apart and make them more memorable, more individual, vastly more noteworthy than icons elsewhere. Foremost among these is the ability - so gloriously evinced in the seaside pier - to be magnificent while having no evident purpose at all."

Jonathan Dimbleby: "Half a century ago, when Britain had yet to escape wartime austerity, the Solent was virtually deserted. Now the weekend waterway is strewn with expensive yachts and glossy speedboats. But they are merely the backdrop to a very English art form that has yet to perish: a simple afternoon at the seaside."

Jo Brand: “A country childhood sits inside you, always filling you with a feeling of well-being. I could not imagine I would have had such a happy beginning had I spent my formative years in the smoke.”

Laura Barton: “The thing I have always loved about England is its wildness, its unbridled vigour and fire and ruggedness, it is there in our language and our landscape, our manner and our music.”

Kevin Spacey: “Having lived in London for a number of years, I’ve started to make a real effort to explore a little more of England’s great countryside. The sheer volume of attractions, often peculiar-looking monuments and dramatic landscape, makes any trip beyond the M25 sound pretty exhausting. But, I have to say, I’m never disappointed.”

Ends

Extracts from the 87 short essays from Icons of England are available for publication. For a full list of contributors and subjects or cover artwork, please contact the CPRE press office.

Notes to Editors

1. All royalties from ‘Icons of England’ go CPRE. The book is a Transworld publication and has a recommended retail price of £7.99. Icons of England is available now from all good retailers.

· CPRE, the Campaign to Protect Rural England, is a charity which promotes the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of rural England. We advocate positive solutions for the long-term future of the countryside. Founded in 1926, we have 60,000 supporters and a branch in every county. President: Bill Bryson. Patron: Her Majesty The Queen. www.cpre.org.uk