

Membership FAQs

Why join Cambridgeshire ACRE?

Isn't this just like attending your events or training?

No. Membership is different. Events and training are one-off. Membership is ongoing.

Membership gives you access to support when you need it, not just when something is scheduled. That might be a quick phone call, help with a complex issue or guidance when something unexpected happens.

For many organisations, membership becomes a core part of how they operate, not an optional extra.

We don't need support right now, so why would we join?

That's exactly when most organisations choose to join.

The reality is that challenges rarely arrive with warning:

- A governance issue
- A safeguarding concern
- A funding opportunity with a tight deadline
- A building or energy issue
- A difficult community situation

Membership means you are not starting from scratch when something happens. You already have trusted support in place.

How is this different from other organisations we already belong to?

You may already receive support from other organisations, and that's important. Cambridgeshire ACRE plays a distinct role.

We focus specifically on rural communities and the unique challenges they face. We work across community buildings, parish councils and local groups, bringing together insight, experience and connections that are rooted in place.

We don't duplicate support. We strengthen it.

What do we actually get for the cost?

Membership is designed to support you in practical, everyday ways.

It gives you:

- Direct access to advice and support when issues arise
- Invitations to events, networks and learning opportunities
- Funding alerts, updates and insight
- Opportunities to connect with others facing similar challenges
- Representation in local and national conversations
- Discounts on consultancy and additional services

It is support you can draw on throughout the year, not just at set points in time.

Is it good value for money?

Membership is a small, planned cost that helps you avoid much bigger, unplanned ones.

Whether that is time, risk or making the wrong decision, the value is often felt the moment you need support.

Many members see it as part of their core operating costs, alongside insurance or professional support.

We're a small organisation. Is this relevant to us?

Yes, and often it matters even more. Smaller organisations rarely have access to specialist advice in-house. Membership provides that reassurance, without the need to bring in external support each time.

It helps you make confident decisions, even with limited capacity.

We don't have time to engage fully with everything on offer

You don't need to. Membership is not about attending everything. It is about knowing support is there when you need it.

Some members engage regularly. Others only get in touch when something changes or becomes challenging.

Either way, the benefit is the same. You are supported.

What if we're not sure yet?

That's completely understandable. But most organisations find that once they join, they quickly see where membership fits into their work. It becomes something they rely on, rather than something they question.

Why does membership matter to Cambridgeshire ACRE?

Membership helps us stay connected to the communities we support.

It ensures our work is shaped by real needs, strengthens the voice of rural communities and allows us to continue providing support where it is needed most.

In return, you are part of that shared network and influence.

Membership isn't an add-on. For many organisations, it's part of how they operate with confidence.