



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England  
SOUTH EAST REGION

## CPRE South East Campaign Briefing 31 July 2006



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### South East Briefing

Welcome to the first trial edition of South East Briefing. News collection was begun in mid-July, so is not intended to be comprehensive for the month. Some links are to a [dummy web page](#), while the SE region website is established. Comments and feedback will be very welcome: [campaign@cprexon.org.uk](mailto:campaign@cprexon.org.uk). Similarly, please feed in contributions for the August edition, which is now in preparation. Andy Boddington, 1 August 2006.

#### 1. CPRE South East

**Quarterly.** The latest report from Regional Director Edward Dawson discusses the main planning issues facing campaigners in the South East: <http://tinyurl.com/n9ra8>

#### 2. Housing

**Brownfield.** CPRE has published its latest views on brownfield development. <http://tinyurl.com/hlrzq> It has also produced a league table of planning authority performance in using brownfield and housing density: <http://tinyurl.com/16gke>. The table comes with a strong health warning.

**Brownfield data.** DCLG data reveals that 74% of new dwellings are on brownfield, up 3% over two years (72% in the South East). Housing density is now 41 dwelling per hectare: <http://tinyurl.com/zgqct>.

**SE housing strategy.** A framework will inform the regional housing strategy, improve access to housing for vulnerable people, and aid joint working across the SE. <http://tinyurl.com/jmg6m>

**House prices leaping.** The average house price in England will be nearly £300,000 in five years time, according new housing market forecasts by Oxford Economic Forecasting. David Orr, chief executive of the National Housing Federation, said: "Up to 80,000 new affordable homes a year are needed to stop our housing timebomb exploding." 24dash: <http://tinyurl.com/hamwk>. Report: England's Housing Timebomb: <http://tinyurl.com/pqkl9>

**Green housing** is profitable says the Chartered Institute of Building in a new guide for developers: <http://tinyurl.com/jr2pc>

**Smaller housing.** The average plot size for a new property has shrunk from 988 to 973 square feet during the past 12 months. <http://tinyurl.com/f9bf3>

**Review delay.** The DCLG review of a possible merger of English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation has been delayed and will have a stronger emphasis on affordable housing. <http://tinyurl.com/osxyx>

#### 3. Planning

**"Scrap Prescott's Plans" and build in Gateway.** Plans by John Prescott to concrete over large areas of the South East should be scrapped and millions of new homes built instead in London and along the Thames. Sir Terry Farrell, the international architect who advises the Thames Gateway Development Corporation, told ministers that there is room for millions of homes in the area between the East End of London and Dartford, Kent, and that Government plans for the area "lack vision". CPRE's Thames Gateway project leader Nigel Kersey said: "There are now widespread misgivings about the wisdom, feasibility and cost of the Government's sustainable communities plans for massive housing development in the South East. Only the Thames Gateway offers the Government an honourable way out..." Daily Telegraph: <http://tinyurl.com/n5yae>. The Times: <http://tinyurl.com/qs38c>; <http://tinyurl.com/hkz6g>.

**Diamonds bid.** Nine cities and towns in the South East made a pitch for growth and investment as "diamonds" under the Regional Economic Strategy. Keith Mitchell emphasised that they needed to work with smaller towns. <http://tinyurl.com/gp6vv>

**Infrastructure.** SEERA has published its research on infrastructure needs in the South East. <http://tinyurl.com/l6n6t>

**Good design.** Ruth Kelly has called on developers and local authorities to give greater emphasis to good design. All but very minor planning applications will require a statement of design and access principles. <http://tinyurl.com/nuf4t>

**Adverts out, flags in.** Laws limiting the display of national flags are to be scrapped. Planning Minister Yvette Cooper also urged councils to take a tough stance against those who try to get around planning rules by putting unauthorised adverts in fields. She also called on councils to work closely with the Highways Agency to ensure that roadside advertising is appropriate to the landscape and does not pose a hazard to those using the roads. BBC: <http://tinyurl.com/psbyk>. The Times: <http://tinyurl.com/e97js>. DCLG: <http://tinyurl.com/gp7mf>. CPRE National: <http://tinyurl.com/efz6w>. CPRE Oxfordshire: <http://tinyurl.com/kytsv>.

**Abolish free parking.** The Commission for Integrated Transport said free parking at out-of-town shopping centres must be abolished to save traditional high streets from terminal decline and protect the environment. <http://tinyurl.com/jj7ox>

**Sustainable Communities Bill.** 334 MPs have signed a Parliamentary Early Day Motion supporting the bill, which would require the government to assist councils and communities in promoting local sustainability and enable the promotion of local economies and local services and facilities. Local MPs Andrew Smith and Boris Johnson have not signed: <http://tinyurl.com/z6c5c>

**The Commons Act** received Royal Assent and a National Commons Stakeholder Group will be set up by Defra. <http://tinyurl.com/luk6o>. The implications of the Bill and a recent House of Lords ruling in Oxford are reviewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/q2vwq>

#### 4. Transport

**Heathrow.** The Department for Transport has reaffirmed its commitment to a short, third runway after 2015, providing air quality conditions are met, perhaps by moving the emissions from cars north of the M4. Times: <http://tinyurl.com/nktdo>. DfT: <http://tinyurl.com/ofot9>

**M25.** Plans to cut congestion, including traffic lights on slip roads, were outlined as Transport Secretary Douglas Alexander said "widening is not the only answer." <http://tinyurl.com/jto5o>

**Hindhead.** The A3 tunnel in Surrey is approved in principle. <http://tinyurl.com/lases>

**Regional Spatial Strategies.** The DfT has produced a guide to producing Regional Transport Strategies. <http://tinyurl.com/k4dkk>

#### 5. Environment and Heritage

**Coastal access.** Defra has delayed the consultation on improving access until early 2007. Defra: <http://tinyurl.com/m6o3e>. Daily Telegraph: <http://tinyurl.com/jzg6q>

**Waste.** The Local Government Association has launched a four-point plan on how shoppers, supermarkets, councils and business can tackle the rising levels of waste. <http://tinyurl.com/fteqp>. **Surrey** might not meet landfill reduction targets but two incinerators are planned. <http://tinyurl.com/zd2nl>. **Kent** is consulting on incinerator sites. <http://tinyurl.com/esgc7>. **Ken Livingstone** is to mount a legal challenge to prevent the construction of an incinerator next to the River Thames. <http://tinyurl.com/jfhp9>

**River Thames.** Defra has announced options to improve the environmental quality of the River Thames and River Lee. <http://tinyurl.com/jno92>

**English Heritage** has issued guidance on Local Area Agreements and the Historic Environment. <http://tinyurl.com/gmdx2>

**Gateway bumblebee "catastrophe".** Four endangered species bumblebee on wild flowers in the Thames Gateway and environmentalists say development will be "catastrophic" for them. <http://tinyurl.com/hmpmv>

## 6. Nuclear waste disposal

The Committee set up to look at waste disposals (CORWM) has made 15 recommendations, including suggesting that regions could get better infrastructure and services for hosting the repository. One site/region could host current waste, but up to four more repositories would be needed if the government goes ahead with new nuclear plants. There are three main recommendations:

- ◆ **Deep storage.** Geological disposal as the best option for the long-term management for the UK's higher activity radioactive waste.
- ◆ **Short-term storage.** A continued commitment to the safe and secure interim storage of the waste during the period it will take to plan and construct the geological disposal facility.
- ◆ **Regions** should compete to host the facility. In return for housing the repository, the winning region would receive compensation through improved roads, schools, better emergency services and health monitoring.

The Guardian: <http://tinyurl.com/hpsx7>. Telegraph: "Devolution will add to costs": <http://tinyurl.com/h7k6r>; Leader: <http://tinyurl.com/gbazm>. Full report: <http://tinyurl.com/kqqkh>

## 7. South East Headlines

**Aylesbury.** CPRE has added its weight to concerns from residents over plans to build thousands of houses in the Vale's countryside over the next 20 years. <http://tinyurl.com/hogfd>

**Bedford.** A 2,300m Olympic-standard rowing lake is approved. <http://tinyurl.com/n7y6w>

**Dartford.** Town centre scheme blocked by Kelly to protect the town's historic environment. <http://tinyurl.com/h335p>; <http://tinyurl.com/g2g56>

**Dungeness** A nuclear power station is to be decommissioned by 2111. <http://tinyurl.com/eebx>

**Kent.** Go-ahead for Medway redevelopment as part of £1bn regeneration. <http://tinyurl.com/hrgds>

**Ken Livingstone** has been given stronger powers over housing and planning in London by Ruth Kelly: <http://tinyurl.com/kobak>

**Light pollution.** New street lighting will reduce light pollution in West Sussex and Harrow. <http://tinyurl.com/rrl64>

**Liveability Minister** Kay Andrews announced the South East's best parks and green spaces. <http://tinyurl.com/oqvqx>.

**Olympics.** The sustainability policy for the 2012 Olympic games has been published but does not promise a carbon neutral games: <http://tinyurl.com/eadb5>. Policy: <http://tinyurl.com/z47ow>

**Sussex.** Lewes District Council launched a legal challenge on the new football stadium at Falmer: <http://tinyurl.com/kp3ps>. CPRE's views on the stadium: <http://tinyurl.com/hyfme>.

**Sussex.** Eco-warriors have been ordered to leave 'Ewok village' where are fighting plans to cut down 210 trees in an area earmarked for 875 new homes. <http://tinyurl.com/flqq>

**Thames Gateway.** Large areas of the Thames Gateway could be allowed to flood as part of an "estuary park" according to a report leaked to the BBC. CPRE's Thames Gateway project leader Nigel Kersey said: "They've explicitly rejected the national park designation as such because they feel that it might restrict development. That could be a worrying sign that they intend to allow the landscape of the Thames Gateway to be covered in sprawling housing developments." <http://tinyurl.com/kglzq> The report has since been published by SEERA and looks at providing alternative recreational land to prevent visitors damaging the heathlands. <http://tinyurl.com/r2dbo>

**Thames Water** faces a fine of up to £140m for poor customer relations: <http://tinyurl.com/ghurb> and is criticised by the Environment Minister over leakage: <http://tinyurl.com/rkz2z>.

## 8. Government in the South East

**Keith Mitchell scores hat-trick.** Mitchell was reappointed Chairman of the South East England Regional Assembly: <http://tinyurl.com/jll5j>. He has also been elected Chairman of the English Regions Network: <http://tinyurl.com/jx28g> and is arguing for more powers to devolved to the Assemblies: <http://tinyurl.com/hqksz>. He remains chairman of Oxfordshire County Council.

**SEEDA** has boasted of the boost it gives the economy of the South East. <http://tinyurl.com/rqapl>  
**GOSE**. The Government Office of the South East annual report: <http://tinyurl.com/kk2j8>

## 9. Diary

15 Sept. SEERA Executive Committee

27 Sept. SEERA Planning Committee

6 Oct. SEERA Regional Housing Board

20 Oct. SEERA Executive Committee

27 Oct. SEERA Regional Transport Board

[Further details of SEERA Meetings.](#)

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Issued by [CPRE Oxfordshire](#). Editor: Andy Boddington. The information in this Briefing is gathered from a wide range of sources and views expressed are not necessarily those of CPRE Oxfordshire.

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