



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England

Secretaries: Gill & Dave Gray - 01275 857746

**Report to ALCA, North Somerset Group  
Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2007**

**Date for your diary**

**CPRE Avonside AGM & Village of the Year Awards  
Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2007  
Cleeve Village Hall**

## **New maps show North Somerset has only 10% undisturbed countryside**

CPRE recently commissioned research to measure the disturbance to the English countryside. The new maps have been generated using the same methodology as earlier maps for the early 1960s and 1990s, which have also now been digitally re-mastered. The current maps allow comparison of the change in the area of England and its regions disturbed by noise and visual intrusion from urban development, major infrastructure, road traffic and airports between the three time periods.

The research shows the South West as England's fastest growing region, under pressure from all forms of development. The region was once the least disturbed by noise and visual intrusion in the 1960s with only 15% of its area affected, but now over 40% is blighted. The position for the West of England is much more dramatic showing North Somerset with only just over 10% of undisturbed countryside.

Our local figures for percentage of countryside disturbed are as follows:

North Somerset 89.89%  
South Gloucestershire 77.56%  
Bath & North East Somerset 68.77%

## **Planning**

### **Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Examination in Public (Eip)**

The Panel is due to report early in December, which is a slight delay to the timetable. The next formal consultation is expected next February/March/April with issue of the final RSS during the summer of 2008. The indications are that the housing numbers will increase from the current 92,500 to around 140,000 for the West of England area. If we are to assume this number is divided equally across the area this could mean almost 40,000 new homes by 2026 in North Somerset. This is an enormous challenge for the local authorities, which are working on the current proposals and developing strategies for implementing the numbers originally proposed.

## **West of England Partnership**

The Challenge of Managing Growth Seminar held @Bristol on the 21<sup>st</sup> September organised by the West of England Partnership heard an update on developments and gave an opportunity for views to be exchanged. Concern was expressed on the sustainability of delivery. The indication that the delivery may be 'managed' on behalf of the West of England was not welcomed.

CPRE is represented on the West of England Partnership, Planning, Transport and Environment Group.

## **Local Development Framework – Issues and Options for the North Somerset Core Strategy**

Consultation is due to start shortly on the Issues and Options for the North Somerset Core Strategy which sets the overall context for land use planning within North Somerset and also for the Weston-super-Mare Town Centre Area Action Plan which looks in detail at Weston's town centre, sea front and gateway areas. The **closing date for comments is Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November** and we would urge all Parish and Town Councils to respond to this important planning stage for North Somerset.

## **Homes for the future, more affordable, more sustainable – Housing Green Paper**

Connected to the Government ambition to increase the number of houses built each year is new legislation and other changes, some of these are in the Housing Green Paper.

The Government's Housing Green Paper consultation ends on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2007. The document can be found on

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homesforfuture>

CPRE has produced a briefing with a provisional view on the proposals with reference points. Members may access this briefing via the CPRE website [www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk)

## **Planning White Paper**

Consultation on the Planning White Paper ended on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2007. We understand there were around 32,000 responses. Many thanks to all those who responded.

## **Test for North Somerset Policy**

North Somerset Local Plan Policy H/7 was put to the test recently.

An appeal was held in Wrington to challenge the decision to refuse a proposal for the restoration of Brook House and 12 new dwellings on the site, which is within the village development boundary. The appeal has been dismissed by the Planning Inspector who upheld policy H/7 that the development would lead to urban housing need being met in a location outside the four main towns (Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead) where employment opportunities are more limited and which would add to or contribute to creating a dormitory settlement with high levels of out-commuting. Full commentary on the three day appeal (with pictures) can be found on the Wrington village website at <http://www.wrington.org.uk/> and the appeal decision can be viewed via the planning inspectorate website ref 2036212

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/genpub/en/1102936775950.html>

## **Georgie Bigg**

District Chairman, CPRE North Somerset, October 2007

**Local website:** [www.cpreavonside.org.uk](http://www.cpreavonside.org.uk)

**Local Email:** [info@cpreavonside.org.uk](mailto:info@cpreavonside.org.uk)

**National website:** [www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk)