

Hampshire

Basingstoke. The inspector examining the Basingstoke and Deane local plan said he is: “Seriously concerned that the plan may not provide a sufficiently robust platform for providing new homes or an adequate strategy for delivering that objective.” He says the 748 dwellings a year proposed is “some way short of the South East Plan figure for the period to 2026”, which was 945 dwellings a year. He questions why the lowest estimate of housing need has been adopted. He also said the plan does not have adequate analysis of whether development is sustainable [LG](#) [L](#) [P](#). Eric Pickles has approved 425 homes at Razors Farm, north-east of Basingstoke. He accepted that the development would harm landscape and the setting of heritage assets, but said that the council lacked a five year land supply [C](#) [P](#) [L](#) [C](#).

Winchester. One hundred people protested outside Winchester council offices after a developer tried to drop a commitment to build 100 affordable homes on a 287 homes development. The developer also says it is not viable to make a payment in lieu [IH](#). Winchester council have approved controversial plans to build near ancient woodland in Knowle [HC](#).

Littlehampton neighbourhood plan was approved by 86% of voters in the referendum, a result tempered by the 16% turnout [PC](#).



Plans for Whitehill Bordon

East Hampshire council has approved an outline planning application for a 500-home development at the former Ministry of Defence barracks at Whitehill and Bordon eco town. The plans include employment areas and extensive green space [C](#) [C](#).

Eastleigh. A high court judge has given permission for the judicial review of Eastleigh council’s decision to approve plans for a 1,400-home development on the site of a hotel and golf course east of Southampton [D](#) [C](#).

Isle of Wight. Two schemes, one for 89 homes and a second for 40 homes on land south of Hazely Combe, have been granted permission by a planning inspector who found that the council’s five year land supply existed on paper not in practice. On impact on the countryside, he said the developments would not be: “visually harmful or incongruous. And change, of itself, is not necessarily harmful” [C](#) [C](#). CPRE Isle of Wight awarded Natural Wight’s Green Army a trophy for its work on conservation [L](#).

CPRE Hampshire has announced the winners of its eighth annual Countryside Awards, including a forest holiday project, a conservation group, a junior school and a boat house [CPRE](#) [HC](#). It also announced the results of its children’s poetry competition [CPRE](#).

CPRE Campaign to Protect Rural England South East

South East eBulletin

October 2014

South East Roundup

www.cprese.org.uk

Berkshire

Housing. Plans for 400 homes north of Newbury have been resubmitted, after a previous application was thrown out on access grounds [L](#) [L](#). A planning appeal is underway into 210 homes at Mans Hill, Burghfield Common [C](#). Reading council is drawing up plans for up to 875 new homes across Purley, Tilehurst, Calcot and Theale, all in West Berkshire council’s area [L](#) [GS](#).

Roundup. Zippo circus is facing opposition against 24 extra temporary accommodation units for the circus school at Enborne [L](#). Windsor and Maidenhead council is backing plans for new taxiways at Heathrow, which will allow Heathrow to alternate the use of both its runways regardless of wind direction [L](#). Network Rail has suspended tree removal work at Sunning Common, Berkshire and in Merseyside after failing to consult residents [C](#). The UK’s first floating solar farm has been installed at Sheepslands Farm, Wargrave [BBC](#) [G](#).

Buckinghamshire

Housing. A planning inquiry has been held into plans for Gladman Developments’ proposal for 375 homes in Winslow, contrary to the newly approved neighbourhood plan for the town [BA](#). Chalfont St Peter parish council has lost its appeal court action against Chiltern council’s core strategy and it’s award of planning permission for 200 homes on the Holy Cross site. The parish council had wanted to relocate the local school to the site [LGL](#) [C](#). Longwick villagers are opposing Gladman plans for 175 new homes, but Wycombe council officers say the area is not green belt and the council does not have a five year land supply [BFP](#).

Neighbourhood planning. The Marsh Gibbon neighbourhood plan has been approved by an inspector and will proceed to a referendum on 11 December [LG](#). Aylesbury Vale is consulting on the Wing neighbourhood plan, which provides for two housing allocations for around 50 dwellings each, and a number of areas to be designated as Local Green Space. Closes 5 December [LG](#).

Green belt. Farnham Royal Parish Council is urging restoration of green belt land after a request from a company to relax an enforcement notice to remove 15,000 tonnes of dumped waste. The company says the site cannot be restored to its former position and wants to leave dumped topsoil on the site [L](#).

Solar. A 45-acre solar farm near Princes Risborough has been unanimously rejected by Wycombe council for being: “Unacceptable both in landscape terms and with regards to highways impacts” [L](#) [C](#).

Kent

Ashford. The 5,750 home development at Chilmington Green has been given outline planning permission by the borough council. Eight thousand people had signed a petition against the development. A local resident told the BBC: “It will be killed. It’s a very peaceful part on the edge of the Weald. They want to invade us with nearly 6,000 homes” [BBC](#) [KN](#) [KN](#) [O](#). Karen Hopkins from the Keep Chilmington Green said: “To destroy 1,000 acres of countryside by building a brick and concrete monster is nothing short of vandalism” [KN](#). Gerry Clarkson, leader of Ashford council, backed the scheme [L](#):

“We now await the detail, which is critical to the success of the whole project. Phase one has to be right and must set the tone for the development. Our emphasis is on high space standards, enough parking and really good quality public realm works.”

Lodge Hill. Medway council voted to approve the outline planning application for 5,000 homes at Lodge Hill, an ex-MoD site designated a SSSI for its nightingale population [CPRE](#) [LG](#). The Woodland Trust condemned the decision [KN](#). Eric Pickles will not decide on whether to call in the plans as he is a member of the RSPB [C](#) [P](#).

Fort Halstead. CPRE Kent said plans to build 450 homes on green belt land in the Kent Downs AONB at Fort Halstead near Sevenoaks are unacceptable. CPRE Kent Senior Planner Brian Lloyd said: “It cannot be justified to build 450 homes in a remote area, without services and facilities to support them” [CPRE](#) [CPRE](#) [L](#).

Tonbridge and Malling council approved outline plans for phase three of the Kings Hill scheme in Kent, including 635 homes, a new primary school, an extension to a community centre, additional allotments and sports pitches. The site is on current employment land, but the council does not have a five year land supply [P](#). Opposition is growing to plans by Kent county council to build a school in the green belt at Tonbridge [L](#).

Canterbury council refused permission for plans to redevelop a former golf course at Herne Bay into a 572-home mixed-use scheme with a large sports centre. Council officers said the plans would lead to congestion, and lacked measures to mitigate the development’s impacts on the nearby Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay special protection area and Ramsar site [O](#). A planning barrister engaged by CPRE Kent and Herne and Broomfield parish council has said that Canterbury’s emerging local plan is unsound. The [plan](#) allocates 3,000 new homes at four strategic sites in Herne Bay. The QC said that the council should have re-assessed the impact on habitats and the environment after it had increased the housing target from 10,200 new homes by 2026 to 15,600 new homes by 2031. It also asked whether the proposed distribution of housing remained appropriate and sustainable. CPRE Kent has sent legal the opinion to Eric Pickles [O](#) [P](#) [CPRE](#) [KO](#).

Thanet. Eric Pickles has approved 550 houses at Ramsgate, saying the council does not have a five year land supply. He said that loss of greenfield land and moderate harm to the setting of heritage assets could only be partly mitigated, but the benefits of new housing outweighed this [C](#) [KO](#). Tesco has abandoned plans for a superstore on the seafront at Arlington, Margate [G](#) [C](#) [P](#).

Maidstone council has rejected the plans for a business park at Waterside Park by Junction 8 of the M20 against officers’ advice. CPRE Kent had questioned the economic benefits of the scheme and said it would have been hugely detrimental to the countryside setting of the Kent Downs AONB and the heritage setting of Leeds Castle [CPRE](#) [KN](#).

Gravesham council has unanimously adopted its local plan core strategy to 2028. The number of homes was increased from 4,600 to 6,170 by a planning inspector, who said that “a wholesale release of Green Belt” land is not likely to be necessary [L](#). The Woodland Trust said plans for the Ebbsfleet garden city could threaten 35 acres of ancient woodland [C](#) [L](#).

Fracking. A report from CPRE Kent says that fracking at four potential drilling sites in East Kent could damage the aquifer which supplies 70% of the county’s water. The campaign group has sent its report to energy minister Matthew Hancock in a bid get the area excluded from fracking. Vice president Richard Knox-Johnston said: “Water resources in Kent are already seriously stressed. We fear that water supply boreholes could be damaged causing pollution which would threaten public health as well as harm environmental quality, agriculture and habitats” [KO](#) [CPRE](#).

CPRE Kent. Featuring CPRE Kent’s Hilary Newport, Andrew Penman wrote in the Daily Mirror about: “How the so-called housing crisis is leading to the destruction of our countryside.” Hilary said: “We look back at the 1960s high-rise developments and think ‘weren’t they stupid’ and I’m genuinely fearful that the next generation will look back at what we’re doing and think the same thing” [O](#). CPRE Kent is aiming to persuade all 13 district councils in Kent and Medway to compile a Local List of non-listed heritage assets to give the greater protection from demolition or inappropriate change [CPRE](#).

Oxfordshire

Oxford Growth Strategy Route Map. An Oxford council report has said neighbouring local authorities should assist in meeting its housing needs. It renews the council’s support for an urban extension into the city’s green belt in order to avoid a “deepening housing crisis” [LG](#) [P](#). The report says that the City Deal signed with the government in 2014 made commitments for the Oxfordshire local authorities “to enable housing growth in the city [and] to accelerate the delivery of 7,500 new homes across the county. Claiming the council city supports the principle of the green belt it says:

“Up to half [the] housing need could be met without requiring green belt land. This means that an area equivalent to less than 1% of the green belt in the county might be needed, and there may be no net loss if green belt land is swapped or extended in areas elsewhere in the county.”

CPRE Oxfordshire’s Helen Marshall said the plan had been drawn up without public consultation. She said the planned housing was a result of job growth not local need [OM](#). Oxfordshire council leader Ian Hudspeth has come in for flak after suggesting that buses could travel across Oxford in tunnels. He is also proposing a tunnel under the A34 to the A40 in North Oxford [OM](#). The city’s head of housing admitted that transport infrastructure could not cope with planned growth [OM](#).

Five year land supply. A report by CPRE Oxfordshire, *Selling out: The impact of housing land supply requirements on Oxfordshire's countryside*, says that five-year land supply has become the major factor in deciding planning applications. In the past two years at least 800 houses have been built on greenfield sites as a result. It is calling on MPs to influence the government to amend paragraph 49 of the NPPF to remove the presumption in favour of planning permission where the local authority is unable to demonstrate a five-year land supply [CE](#).

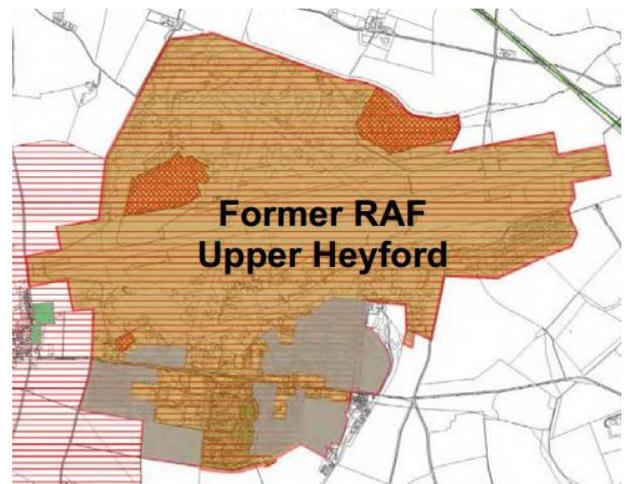
Port Meadow. Removing the top storey of the university accommodation blocks that overshadow Port Meadow is one of three mitigation options set out in an independent assessment. The study found that the Castle Mill development had had a "high adverse impact" on four major heritage sites at Port Meadow, the Oxford skyline, the Thames and its towpath and the listed St Barnabas Church. The university wants to adopt the cheaper option of planting tree screening and to soften the colour and texture of the building. Toby Porter of the Save Port Meadow campaign said: "Trees will take 15 years to grow and will not reach the height of the buildings. Without reduction in height, the reduction in impact on Port Meadow is minimal. What is unacceptable is for the university seeking to balance their own financial interest after building a carbuncle they should not have built" [OM](#). The report and mitigation options are subject of a seven-week public consultation. Closes December 18 [LG](#) [LG](#).

Oxford. Sushila Dhall, chair of the Oxfordshire Green Party said the consultation on the proposed Northern Gateway development for an 8,000 staff business park and 500 houses at Pear Tree is "shambolic" and the plans are bigger than allowed by the core strategy [OM](#). At a public meeting, Mike Gilbert for CPRE Oxfordshire said: "A lot more detailed work needs to be carried out to justify the scale of development proposed. The area action plan must be compliant with the core strategy and there is a big question mark over its compliance. This policy needs to be amended" [OM](#). The county council is being accused of putting a block on new cycling schemes in Oxford [OM](#). An inquiry verdict is awaited on whether Foxwell Drive, Oxford should be registered as a town green, blocking a controversial junction to link the 885-home Barton Park development across the A40 to Northway [OM](#) [OM](#) [OM](#).

Cherwell council is set to approve a new version of its local plan prior to the examination in public resuming in December. The examination was suspended in June after concern about the level of housing proposed. Revisions to the plan include an additional 6,050 homes above the 16,750 originally proposed for the district between 2011 and 2031, concentrated in Bicester, Banbury and Upper Heyford. The revisions say:

"Over the Plan period 10,129 homes are to be provided at Bicester, some 7,319 homes at Banbury and 5,392 homes in the rural areas including Kidlington. A further 2,707 homes are allocated at the North West Bicester Eco Town but are not presently expected to be delivered until after 2031."

The new proposals include 300 homes on rare wildlife meadows at Gavray Drive, Bicester. A 1,500-signature petition has been presented to councillors to protect the meadows [LG](#) [BT](#) [BT](#) [BT](#). South Northants council is opposing expansion of Banbury across the M40 into its area, saying it will damage valuable landscapes [L](#).



New housing sites for Upper Heyford (grey)

Cherwell. Gladman Developments is bidding for 95 greenfield homes in Kirtlington [OM](#). An application to build 230 homes north of Banbury have been refused by Cherwell council, which said: "There would have been unacceptable harm to the landscape and setting of Banbury." Cherwell does not have a five year land supply [L](#). Cherwell council has approved a 40-acre solar farm at Upper Arcott [LG](#).

Bicester is considering becoming a garden city under Nick Clegg's plan for development along East West rail [P](#). Conservative MP for North Oxfordshire Tony Baldry has welcomed the garden city plans and said Cherwell council is currently bidding for Bicester to win garden city status. He said: "A garden city would enable Bicester to be developed as a coherent whole, as a community and town fit for the 21st century... I understand that Cherwell council is in the process of putting forward a bid for Bicester to be considered" [OM](#). An application has been made for an extra 900 homes in the town's north west eco quarter [OM](#).

Vale of White Horse council has agreed its local plan for 20,500 houses up to 2031 [OM](#). The plan includes 5,500 new homes in Didcot and Harwell, 610 in Abingdon and 1,730 in villages near Abingdon. Peter Collins of CPRE Oxfordshire said: "This is an unsustainable plan which will never meet its target. It's based on aspirational housing figures and is being pushed through quickly. It deserves to be properly considered before the green fields of the Vale are spoiled forever." The Vale will begin a consultation on the plan on 7 November [LG](#). Cumnor residents are angry at Vale of White Horse plans to remove land from its green belt despite a decision to drop plans for 200 homes on the site [OT](#).

South Oxfordshire. A developer has resubmitted plans for 177 homes in Benson arguing that South Oxfordshire does not have a five year land supply [L](#).

West Oxfordshire received more than 3,000 comments on its draft local plan, delaying the process while they are considered [OM](#).

Roundup. CPRE Oxfordshire and the Open Space Society are concerned that Oxfordshire council is about to cut back on maintenance of footpaths after a questionnaire asked parish councils to rank paths according to usage [OM](#). 10 MPs have written to the transport secretary calling for a direct train service between Oxford and Bristol [S](#).

Surrey

Cherkley Court. Campaigners against plans for a hotel and golf course in the green belt at Cherkley Court have had a request for a second judicial review rejected by a High Court judge [GS]. The judge said the application by the Cherkley Campaign, which includes CPRE Surrey, said the case had already been argued in the previous judicial review. CPRE's Andy Smith said:

"It is a pity that the court did not seem to have a full grasp of the issues. A longer hearing could have enabled them to come to a different decision. It is not the end of the line as far as the campaign to save the Leatherhead Downs is concerned, and there is every possibility that the Supreme Court will wish to take a serious look at the Cherkley case because of the precedents it sets and its national importance."

Runnymede green belt. A landowner has begun a high court challenge to Runnymede council's decision to give planning permission for offices and homes on green belt land at the former DERA site at Longcross, Chertsey [GS].

Guildford green belt. Guildford's council leader Stephen Mansbridge announced that the green belt will be considered as a 'stronger constraint' in the local plan process, following new government guidance [GS]. The developer planning a 2,000-home town at Wisley Airfield has applied to use the site for film shoots. Surrey council has said that the airfield is not a sustainable location for housing. It says the plans need [GS]:

"A long term high quality, high frequency bus service can be delivered to serve the development; a network of high quality, safe pedestrian and cycle links can be provided to the nearest local facilities and railway stations; and that the development is providing a range of services within the site to serve the development itself to reduce the need to travel."

Redhill green belt. The appeal court has rejected plans by Redhill aerodrome to install a hard runway. The judges agreed with Eric Pickles and Krag – Keep Redhill Airfield Green – who had argued that allowing a hard runway would be inappropriate development in the green belt. The judges said the harm to openness and encroachment into the countryside outweighed any special circumstances claimed by the promoters [L] [L] [P] [C].

Mole Valley green belt. Mole Valley council is to scrap its emerging Housing and Traveller Sites Plan, which includes a green belt review, following the new government green belt guidance. It said the guidance and recent decisions showed: "The balance between strengthening of the green belt and the need to provide housing has shifted towards preservation of the green belt" [P] [GS]. CPRE Surrey said the decision should be an example to other local councils around the county. CPRE Surrey director Andy Smith said the move came after the government strengthened green belt protection: "The bottom line is that housing numbers can no longer be used to justify shrinking of the green belt. Mole Valley councillors seem have accepted this" [RE]. A planning inspector rejected an anaerobic digester in the green belt at Wotton. He said the case was "finely balanced" on green belt grounds, but was inappropriate development and said "there would be a failure to conserve the character and appearance of the AONB" [L] [C].

Green belt solar farm rejected. A planning inspector has rejected a 35,000 panel, 14-hectare solar farm in the green belt near Godalming. The promoter had argued that carbon saving overrode concerns about inappropriate development in the green belt. The inspector disagreed and said the development is inappropriate, would harm openness and would impact on the nearby Surrey Hills AONB and Area of Great Landscape Value [C]. (Thanks to Anthony Isaacs for this item.)

Roundup. Revised plans for a green belt waste plant at Shepperton have been approved [BBC] [P]. The chief executive of the planning inspectorate Simon Ridley defended Nick Boles' controversial intervention in the examination of Reigate and Banstead core strategy. He said: "I think it was a helpful exchange of correspondence and I think it is the minister's prerogative to intervene in situations that he feels that he might want to" [P] [C]. Anti-fracking campaigners have set up a camp in woodland at Horse Hill, near Horley, where oil has been discovered in an exploration well [BBC].

Sussex

Ashdown Forest. A group of landowners has persuaded the appeal court to hear a challenge against East Sussex council's core strategy. The strategy all but banned new development within 7km of the forest, unless alternative green space is provided. The hearing is expected in December [P].

National Park. A swimming pool development in the South Downs National Park was thrown out by developers [MAPS]. Campaigners are opposing two plans for quarries in the national park [MAPS] [C].

Neighbourhood plans. Pickles has made several decisions to protect emerging neighbourhood plans from speculative housing development, including rejecting 200 homes on two sites at Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common in Sussex [C]. He approved a further 150 homes at Hurstpierpoint in line with the neighbourhood plan. The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common neighbourhood plan has now been examined and approved to proceed to referendum. The examiner said: "The plan contains some exemplary approaches to neighbourhood planning" [C]. Billingshurst parish council is to delay its neighbourhood plan until the Horsham District Planning Framework is adopted [WST] [P]. Three development orders proposed by Ferring Parish Council have become some of the first to be examined and recommended for referendum under the government's Community Right to Build scheme [C] [C] [P] [P].

Oil and gas. An attempt by campaigners to have West Sussex declared a "frack free zone" has failed, despite a petition signed by 3,600 people [BBC]. A drilling company has lodged an appeal against refusal of its plans for oil and gas exploration near Wisborough Green. Geoff Davies of Celtique Energie said: "We are firmly of the view that West Sussex council has not followed the spirit or the letter of government policy or good practice in dealing with this planning application." The company has not yet decided whether to appeal against refusal of its application to drill at Fernhurst, which was turned down by South Downs National Park Authority [G] [WST] [MAPS]. Oil has been discovered at Horse Hill, Horley. The exploration company said extraction will not involve fracking [BBC].

Roundup. Ten CPRE Sussex Countryside Awards were presented across three categories: New Sussex Landscape, Sussex Rural Enterprise and Field to Table [SE](#). The issues of whether Newhaven West Beach should be declared at town green has reached the supreme court [SE](#). A landowner in Crawley has been fined for illegal lopping of oak trees . Writing to the West Sussex County Times, CPRE’s Ron Smith said Horsham can resolve its five year land supply problems by adopting the Liverpool approach to catching up with undersupply, rather than the Sedgefield method [WST](#).

East West Rail

East West Rail. A report for the East West consortium suggests that the line will boost annual GDP by £73 million. The report says the new line could also reduce rail journey times between Oxford and Cambridge from 2.5 hours to roughly 60 minutes. It also notes: “There are a number of locations which have major development opportunities in very close proximity to rail stations where the enhancement of rail services might assist or encourage progress” . The latest East West Rail newsletter gives details of progress on construction and on habitat surveys . Steeple Claydon in Bucks is hoping it will get a station on the new line, perhaps delivered through HS2 mitigation measures [BT](#).

Airports

Shortlist. No one was surprised when, in September, the Airports Commission failed to shortlist Boris Johnson’s proposals for a four runway airport on the Isle of Grain in the Thames Estuary. Commission chairman Sir Howard Davies said:

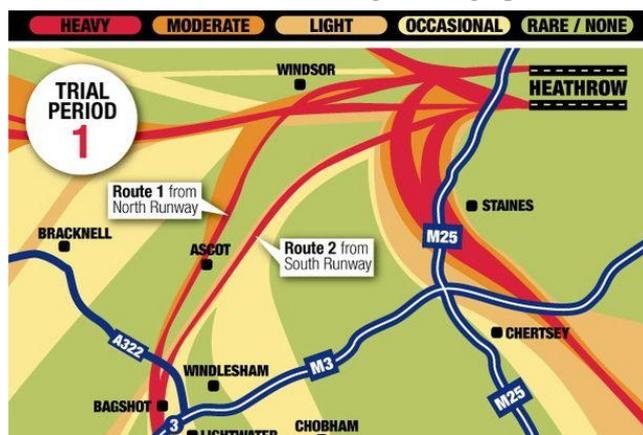
There are serious doubts about the delivery and operation of a very large hub airport in the estuary. The economic disruption would be huge and there are environmental hurdles which it may prove impossible, or very time-consuming to surmount. Even the least ambitious version of the scheme would cost £70 to £90 billion with much greater public expenditure involved than in other options – probably some £30 to £60 billion in total.

The Airports Commission has shortlisted three options: a third runway at Heathrow; lengthening an existing runway at Heathrow; and a second runway at Gatwick [BBC](#) [Gr](#) [Gr](#) [Gr](#) [Gr](#). Mr Johnson had spent £5.2 million developing the airport proposal, but failed to gain the support of the aviation community, businesses or local councils. He pledged to continue to oppose expansion of Heathrow because of noises and pollution [BBC](#) [g](#) [g](#) [g](#) [g](#).

Tests. The Aviation Environment Federation, along with the RSPB, WWF, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, and the Campaign for Better Transport, has developed a series of tests that must be passed in order to gain their backing for airport expansion at Gatwick or Heathrow. The tests deal with climate change, aircraft noise, air quality, biodiversity and democratic involvement . CPRE Kent said adequate airport capacity already exists, pointing out it is not passenger numbers but flight numbers that are the key parameter. It says better use should be made of existing capacity [RE](#).

Gatwick. As the propaganda war heats up ahead of the Davies Commission’s report next summer, Gatwick has published three YouGov polls, which it says support of its expansion campaign [Gr](#) [Gr](#). The Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign has criticised the airport’s economic case for expansion, saying benefits are “wildly exaggerated” The airport has rejected the criticisms [GS](#). The airport has made minor changes to its Noise Action Plan which, according to Airportwatch, do not reduce noise . CAGNE has launched a phone app for making noise complaints [C](#). Villagers are complaining about noise over the south Mole Valley after the airport introduced PR-NAV navigations systems [L](#). The Woodland Trust has met with Gatwick to discuss the potential damage to ancient woodland should a second runway be built . In a letter to the chief executive of Gatwick, Crispin Blunt and other members of the [Gatwick Coordination Group](#) of MPs said: “Heathrow’s plan for a third runway and attendant infrastructure improvements are, at least, plausible.” On Gatwick they said: “The sooner this damaging pipe dream is abandoned, the better for its neighbours, and the real answer to the future of the UK’s aviation capacity can be reached” [Gr](#) [Gr](#).

Heathrow. Residents are blaming new trial Heathrow flight paths for the “unacceptable and intolerable” noise above a number of Surrey villages [GS](#). A petition against the flightpaths has gained more than 4,000 signatures [C](#) [BBC](#). Bracknell council has voted to ensure that Heathrow consults residents on future changes to flightpaths [Gr](#).



Heathrow noise patterns

The CPRE eBulletins

CPRE South East eBulletin is independently written and edited by Andy Boddington: cprenews@andybodderson.co.uk. Views expressed in the eBulletin and its editorial approach are those of its editor and not any part of CPRE.

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