

## CPRE South East eBulletin News for July 2011

### Contents

The New Planning Regime	1
One year guarantee	1
The Localism Bill	1
National Planning Policy Framework	1
Planning and Housing	2
Planning	2
Housing	2
Planning and Climate Change Preparations	2
Landscapes and Ecology	3
Transport	4
High Speed 2	4
Other Transport News	4
Energy and Waste	4
Rural Affairs	5
Food and Farming	5
Campaigning	5

### A 2012 Planning Gap of Olympic Proportions

*These are challenging times for the planning community. Campaigners and council planners are struggling get to grips with the new localism regime. But never fear, as the Grocer reports this week, the supermarkets will be first off the block to take advantage of the 2012 Planning Gap.*

*The government has been no more successful in articulating a vision of localism than it has the Big Society. It has failed on localism because it is steeped in the world of Westminster, that essential curiosity of British culture that is as distant from the real world and rural life as Ottawa is from the townships of the Prairies, or Canberra is from the Outback. But campaigning and conservation charities have done no better. In the last ten days, the National Trust has led Team Rural England against the new planning regime. But in all the heady headlines about the destruction of green belts and emerald fields, the localism agenda has somehow got lost. The collective teamwork of our conservation charities could have defined localism, and could have once and for all given communities a genuine voice in the planning agenda. They did not and the reality is that the localism agenda is as dead as the Big Society.*

*Although we all hope for a rest from the redevelopment of the planning regime during August, we must turn our minds to next year. The Localism Bill will by then be law. The National Planning Policy Framework will be issued in paperback as the planners' new rule book (see our exclusive preview right). Rather longer tomes of guidance will be written over coming months for councillors, officers and campaigners to plough through. But developers will not wait for any guidance.*

*As planners, campaigners and communities struggle to get to grips with the new planning regime, the developers are already racing to select projects that would have been losers before the great planning regeneration of 2011. They will have no shortage of opportunities. At least half of local authorities will not have local plans that will be valid under the new regime. One commentator puts the figure as high as 95%. Where a local plan is silent, almost anything will go in development. We are entering a race without local rules.*

*This is the 2012 Planning Gap. It is a gap of Olympian proportions. Green fields, town centres, communities and tranquillity will be churned underfoot as developers sprint ahead leaving good planning on the starting blocks. This will be Eric Pickles' Olympian legacy for rural life and landscapes.*

**Andy Boddington**

## THE NEW PLANNING REGIME

### One year guarantee

Communities minister Greg Clark announced a **Planning Guarantee**. This will ensure that no planning application should take longer than 12 months to reach a decision, including any appeal. It will affect the less than 1% of applications that currently take longer than a year. Council performance on processing planning applications will be monitored quarterly. He also plans to cut down on paperwork in the planning system and simplify the application process. The proposals will be subject to consultation in the autumn (<http://bit.ly/pGkxkL>; <http://bit.ly/n5AZPv>).

### The Localism Bill

**The Bill** is still on the House of Lords where it moves to report stage on 5 September for further debate and amendment.

**Community Right to Buy.** William Worsley of the Country Land & Business Association condemned the Bill's proposals for Community Right to Buy (Yorks Post: <http://bit.ly/nXWOZK>).

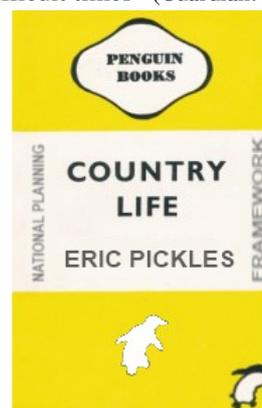
**CPRE study.** A study commissioned by CPRE Gloucestershire has found that a few aspects of neighbourhood plans are seen to add useful additional tools to the community planning toolkit, and many respondents foresee practical difficulties in preparing and implementing them. 'Some respondents... reflected that the time and cost involved in the Bill hardly justified what they saw to be the minor changes it would introduce' (copies of report: [r.j.lloyd@btinternet.com](mailto:r.j.lloyd@btinternet.com)).

### National Planning Policy Framework

**Supermarkets step up development.** The Grocer reports that the consultation draft of the NPPF might lead to more out-of-centre retail sites. Supermarkets have publicly welcomed the proposals but behind closed doors they are speeding up applications. Quoting a development adviser, it says: '50 million sq ft of supermarket development is underway this year and the danger is the horse might have bolted by the time the NPPF comes into force' (<http://bit.ly/qOonDm>).

The **Planning Inspectorate** has published the advice its inspectors will use in planning matters. It says the consultation draft of the NPPF 'is capable of being a material consideration, although the weight to be given to it will be a matter for the decision maker's planning judgment in each particular case.' The document also contains summary of the planning policy changes introduced by the NPPF (<http://bit.ly/mP4gbW>).

**Comment.** Planning specialist Jay Das says that significant numbers of local authorities (60-95%) will not have local plans which conform with the NPPF when it is finally introduced. "The change promoting development where local plan policies are out of date will encourage the shrewdest developers to take advantage in difficult times" (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/q7T7d4>).



With apologies to H.E. Bates  
and Penguin Books

## PLANNING AND HOUSING

### Planning

**Right to Light.** The Law Commission announced it will investigate whether the acquisition and enforcement of rights to light are correctly balanced between those benefiting from the rights and those proposing development. The enjoyment of the light through a window, without interruption or consent, for a period of 20 years will usually give rise to the right. It follows a case where two floors of a commercial building in Leeds had to be removed because they infringed the neighbour's right to light (<http://bit.ly/mOS2Qy>).

**Waste NPSs.** Defra has launched a consultation on bringing major sewers into the planning regime for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, which are currently determined by the Infrastructure Planning Commission (<http://bit.ly/oqqKi6>). Defra has also published the Hazardous Waste NPS for consultation. The NPS covers disposal projects of at least 100,000 tonnes of hazardous waste to landfill or deep storage per year, or any other form of processing or disposal with a capacity of 30,000 tonnes per year (Defra: <http://bit.ly/qIle3R>; Angus Walker: <http://bit.ly/q1oVtm>).

**Around the South East.** Plans to turn the disused Filching Quarry on the South Downs into a landfill site have been withdrawn following opposition from local residents and councillors (Eastbourne Herald: <http://bit.ly/n04Ebn>).

### Housing

**Strategic Development Areas.** Plans for up to 7,500 homes in the North Fareham Strategic Development Area have been given the go-ahead by a planning inspector. Caroline Dibden of CPRE Hampshire said: 'This seems to ride roughshod over people's opinions and the needs of the local population.' The development will in-fill the only piece of open countryside between Wickham and Fareham with a town similar in size to Petersfield (The News: <http://bit.ly/n62yGt>; CPRE Hants: <http://bit.ly/pCU35q>). Hampshire residents are being asked to choose between two locations for thousands of homes, including northeast of Hedge End, a Strategic Development Area in the South East Plan (Daily Echo: <http://bit.ly/pvExua>).

**Around the South East.** Plans to build more than 10,000 new homes over 20 years in Mid Sussex are to go out for consultation (Argus: <http://bit.ly/nhPVrj>). Eric Pickles supported West Berkshire Council's refusal to grant permission for a 750-home development at Pincent's Hill on appeal (Reading Chronicle: <http://bit.ly/mPZK5C>; Beyond Green: <http://bit.ly/nS5jxo>). CPRE Oxfordshire warned Oxford City Council that: 'Too many sites in the city... are used for student accommodation [and] should be used instead for residential developments, which would take away the necessity to develop on green space' (Oxford Times: <http://bit.ly/ncTJq9>).

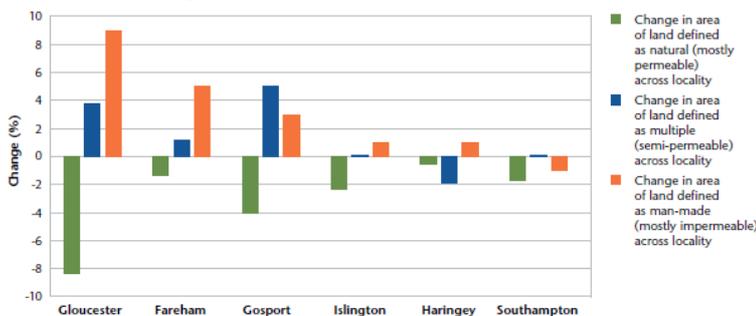
**Garden Cities.** The Town and Country Planning Association has called for a new generation of garden cities. In a report, *Re-imagining Garden Cities for the 21st Century*, it urges Britain to re-discover its planning heritage in creating high quality, beautiful and inclusive places (<http://bit.ly/qN5M1d>).

### Planning and Climate Change Preparations

In its **Second Assessment** of the UK's preparedness for climate change, the Committee on Climate Change warned that the economy could struggle to cope with the impact of climate change on water supplies, and planning decisions are often not proofed against climate change (Report: <http://bit.ly/n8JmQX>; Guardian: <http://bit.ly/oLRSTR>).

**Flood risk.** Around 12,000-16,000 homes in England are still being built on floodplains each year. Eight of the nine local authorities studied have seen an increase in the amount of buildings within areas of river/coastal flood risk in the last ten years. South Hampshire's coast was among the study areas, and the CCC warned it faces a combination of river, coastal and surface water flood risk, high rates of coastal erosion and in some areas risk from heat stress.

**Hard surfacing and green space.** The area of hard surfacing increased in five of the six urban authorities studied, primarily the expense of urban greenspace, increasing the risk of surface water flooding and urban heat island effects.



Green bars show loss of green space and orange bars impermeable surfacing

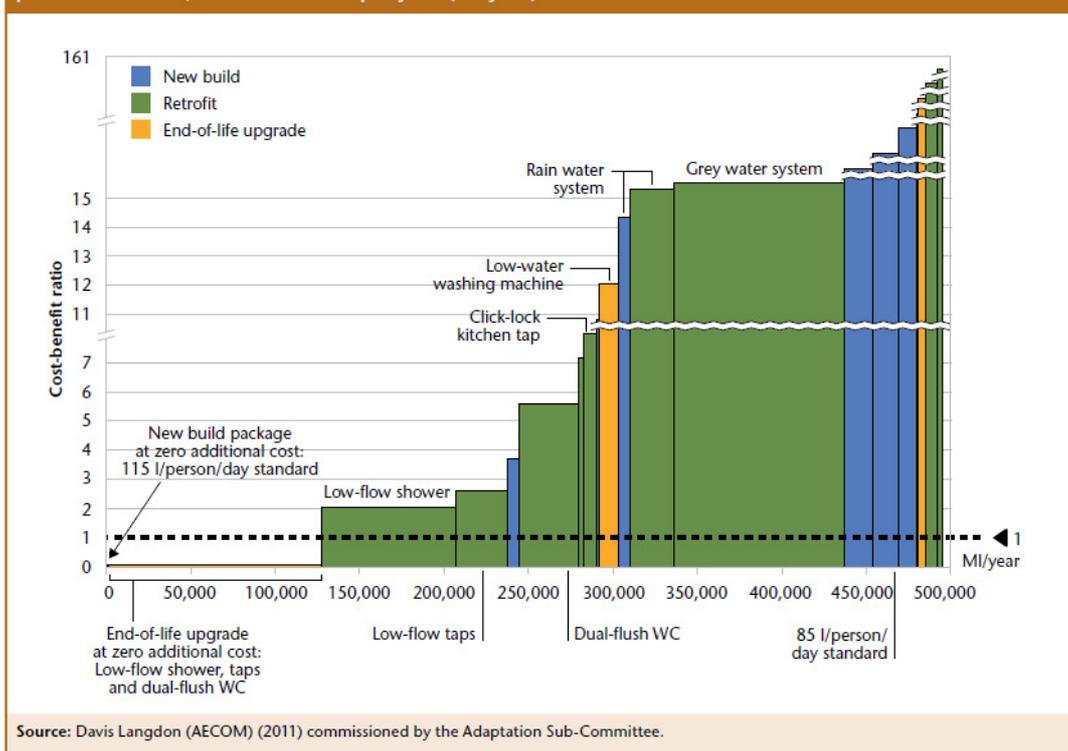
**Buildings.** The CCC says buildings are a priority area for adaptation, because decisions concerning the design, construction and renovation of buildings are long lasting and may be costly to reverse.

**Water** company plans say that climate change is a factor in at least 80% of areas that will have a potential shortfall between supply and demand by 2035. The CCC complains that water companies are not investing to address climate change and this will exacerbate pressures on supply for consumers and on the environment. Abstraction combined with a large reduction in summer flows is likely to significantly increase pressure on freshwater and other habitats. The CCC says it makes sense to implement low-regret supply side measures, such as demand management, first (for glossary of regret measures see: <http://bit.ly/qXJjul>). It complains that water companies tend to bring forward demand management measures first. Reducing leakage will alleviate pressures on supply and is relatively insensitive to climate change compared to supply-side measures. For the South East, the CCC's economic analysis suggests that reducing consumption from the current average of 160 litres per person per day to around 115 litres could be cost effective compared to the long run cost of increasing supply through other means (see graph on next page).

The CCC **concluded** that:

- ◆ The UK is coping with the current climate, but some sectors such as water supply are near their limits, exacerbated by patterns of development and demographic trends, such as the ageing population.
- ◆ Climate risks are not fully incorporated into some major strategic decisions, such as land use planning and investment in water infrastructure. The planning system should include a more transparent assessment of climate change considerations against shorter-term priorities.
- ◆ There is a risk that localised planning could make strategic approaches to long-term climate risks less effective.
- ◆ Low-regret actions that could be taken now to reduce the vulnerability of buildings, but new policy approaches are needed to increase uptake, particularly in existing homes.
- ◆ Embedding climate change more fully into decision-making could reduce the costs of future adaptation.

Figure 5.2: Water efficiency measures for South East England – societal cost curve showing technical potential in 2026, millions of litres per year (Ml/year)



## LANDSCAPES AND ECOLOGY

**Green belt.** The House of Commons Library has produced a briefing note on green belt policy (<http://bit.ly/qRenKT>). Minister of Agriculture, James Paice told the Commons that: ‘the government have no intention of weakening the key protections for the green belt’ (<http://bit.ly/qZb53P>). CPRE Cheshire fears for the future of the green belt as Cheshire West and Chester Council set out options for the Core Strategy (Pioneer: <http://bit.ly/n0Gp6Q>). Plans to build a large garden centre on green belt land near Warwick have been rejected by Warwick District Council saying it would be ‘seriously detrimental to the open character of the green belt’. Mick Jeffs of CPRE Warwickshire said: ‘There was a collective sigh of relief but then a massive drawing of breath as we hope there is no appeal. It was rather a grotesque development in green belt land and would have meant the loss of a lot of trees and hedgerows’ (Courier: <http://bit.ly/p4VtL>). A community stadium and sports village in the green belt outside High Wycombe has been rejected. There is also concern that housing targets will erode the green belt (BFP: <http://bit.ly/pdkcHEv>; <http://bit.ly/qSktXn0>).

**Nature Improvement Areas.** Defra launched a £7.5m grant programme to establish Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs). According to English Nature they are ‘large, discrete areas that will deliver a step change in nature conservation, where a local partnership has a shared vision for their natural environment. The partnership will plan and deliver significant improvements for wildlife and people through the sustainable use of natural resources, restoring and creating wildlife habitats, connecting local sites and joining up local action.’ If you are lost in the jargon, Defra puts it more clearly: ‘The NIAs will see rural and urban sites revitalised and turned into bigger, inter-connected networks of wildlife habitats that will range from 10,000 to 50,000 hectares in size [intending] to re-establish thriving wildlife populations and help species respond to the challenges of climate change.’ The first 12 three year pilot NIAs are due to be up and running by April 2012. (Defra: <http://bit.ly/pOtJFL>; English Nature: <http://bit.ly/ri94uD>;

**Forests.** The Independent Panel on Forestry, which is reviewing the future of forests after the abandoned sell-off, issued its first newsletter (<http://bit.ly/pJDVhH>). The Ramblers told the panel: ‘have a heart of access as well as a heart of oak’ (<http://bit.ly/ovzYGy>). The Forestry Commission launched a new Woodland Carbon Code, intended to offer clarity to those investing in tree planting projects to offset carbon emissions (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/rhyRQI>; FC: <http://bit.ly/rqe8yF>).

**Wildlife laws to be reviewed.** The Law Commission is to review the structure and content of wildlife legislation, which it describes as ‘a legal structure made up of succeeding geological strata of legislation with no coherent design’. It is anticipating greater efficiency, cost savings and greater use of statutory instruments to define laws. It will issue a consultation paper in the second half of 2012. The Commission will also examine the case for conservation covenants. These would create a new statutory interest in land, designed to protect its natural or historic environment (<http://bit.ly/mOS2Qy>).

**Dark skies.** The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority is hoping to apply for dark sky status (BBC: <http://bbc.in/ow4FYK>).

**Coastal Path.** As plans for the coastal access path from Ramsgate Pier to Folkestone move ahead, the Countryside Alliance accused the government of shameful treatment of the owners of sporting rights in the countryside (Kent News: <http://bit.ly/qEupQr>).

**Litter and flytipping.** CPRE Oxfordshire’s Helena Whall warned that reductions in flytipping could be reversed following Oxfordshire County Council’s decision to close two of its eight recycling centres (Witney Gazette: <http://bit.ly/qy21X7>). CPRE published research that shows that over 4,000 full time equivalent green jobs could be created by a UK deposit refund system (DRS) for drinks containers. Bill Bryson said: ‘Politicians tell us that the economy of the future will be driven by green industry and create new green jobs. Well, this research shows how this can be done’ (CPRE: <http://bit.ly/mVAVMn>).

---

## TRANSPORT

---

### High Speed 2

---

**Consultation.** After the consultation closed last Friday, the DfT said that clear majority the 40,000 responses during the five-month public consultation opposed HS2. But Transport Minister Phillip Hammond told the Sunday Telegraph the level of responses was 'relatively low' compared to other big government consultations and said this suggested there was 'not a widespread groundswell of opposition to the plans'. Natural England, the Environment Agency, English Heritage and the Forestry Commission have all expressed concern about HS2; along with MPs, Boris Johnson and at least thirteen local councils (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/nrmxXG>). Boris Johnson said aspects of the route were unacceptable and warned that it did not solve UK airport capacity problems. A senior government source said that Johnson had 'overstepped the line in his opposition to HS2' (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/qWFZEr>; Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/raQZU4>; Standard: <http://bit.ly/otjMEa>).

**Reports condemn HS2.** A report by the Institute of Economic Affairs condemned the proposed £32bn north-south high-speed rail link as economically flawed, a political vanity project, and a recipe for disaster based on bogus calculations that will require a contribution of £1,000 per taxpayer (BBC: <http://bbc.in/oWy1aq>; IEA: <http://bit.ly/n7s1QU>). The Institution of Engineering and Technology said that flaws in the analysis of the HS2 proposal might result in the project producing more, not less, carbon dioxide (ePolitix: <http://bit.ly/qjPRCi>). The Sunday Telegraph cites a report by transport economists Chris Castles and David Parish that concludes that none of the claims for HS2 stack up and that capacity on the existing West Coast Main Line could easily be tripled instead (<http://tgr.ph/nrmxXG>).

**Other HS2 News.** Ramblers chief executive Tom Franklin said: 'Whilst we support improvements to public transport, successful green transport must work with our countryside, not against it. With the benefits of HS2 becoming increasingly unclear and the damage to this beautiful walking country all too obvious, it may be time for the government to rethink its strategy on HS2' (Grough: <http://bit.ly/pTluZw>). A study by PwC for Greengauge 21 says the £13.9bn HS2 railway could be sold for £6bn to £7bn, three years after opening (Engineer: <http://bit.ly/pBLadk>). The Institution of Civil Engineers backed the project. It said the government should commit to the full 'Y' shaped route extending to Leeds and Manchester, and give careful thought is to connection points to the existing network and the costs of in providing extra capacity at terminals (<http://bit.ly/nklyzD>). The DfT is already advertising for engineering companies to take on the role of development manager of the entire project (Independent: <http://ind.pn/mVRoVU>).

**Press.** The Guardian noted a continuing north-south in press coverage on HS2. Coverage in the north tends to point to the economic benefits of the project, while in the south the focus is on local opposition (<http://bit.ly/nbeBGk>).

---

### Other Transport News

---

**South East Rail Strategy.** Network Rail published its London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy. Intended to guide rail development until 2031, the strategy includes existing plans for major schemes such as the Crossrail and Thameslink programmes, as well as ongoing train and platform lengthening works. There will be new services where public expenditure allows. Commuter services in Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes are expected to gain capacity after the construction of HS2 (Rail News: <http://bit.ly/q8XXBc>; Network Rail: <http://bit.ly/oX6WrV>).

The **National Travel Survey 2010** show that trips within the UK continue to decline. Between 1995/97 and 2010, overall trips by private modes of transport fell by 14% while public transport modes increased by 8%. Walking trips saw the largest decrease (DfT: <http://bit.ly/o9huTX>).

**Aviation.** Campaigners lost an Appeal Court challenge against a council decision to grant planning approval for a runway expansion at London Southend Airport (Planning: <http://bit.ly/oIFyI3>). More than 30 airports large and small will be coordinated to cope with extra air traffic during the 2012 Olympics (DfT: <http://bit.ly/riyHdt>).

**Lymington.** Plans to redevelop the ferry terminal and dump 2,000 cubic metres of mud off the coast to safeguard environmentally sensitive marshland will not be called in but will be examined at a public inquiry in October (SDO: <http://bit.ly/nkzHau>).

**Clutter.** Bedford Borough Council's campaign against street clutter, working with CPRE Beds, has seen over 100 unnecessary road signs, railings and bollards removed from roadsides (BoS: <http://bit.ly/o3ggDa>).

---

## ENERGY AND WASTE

---

**Emissions.** The European parliament rejected a key report that would have aimed to cut EU greenhouse gas emissions by 30% (BBC: <http://bit.ly/jWJSTx>). US Congress said that US airlines will not participate in the EU's planned emissions trading scheme for aviation (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/qaracX>).

**Energy statistics.** British household energy use increased by 18% between 1970 and 2009, according to new statistics. In 2008, 5.6% of all electricity consumption in the UK was from renewable resources (Edie: <http://bit.ly/qrtcKo>).

**Electricity Market Reform White Paper.** Energy Minister, Chris Huhne, warned of regular power blackouts by 2020 unless he took 'decisive' action, as he outlined measures to improve the UK's energy market and shift the economy away from a high risk, high-carbon future. An Emissions Performance Standard (EPS) is intended to reinforce the requirement that no new coal-fired power stations are built without CCS, and will also promote investment in gas. (DECC: <http://bit.ly/mV8sOR>; Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/pUVBlr>; Green Alliance: <http://bit.ly/nT1efk>). Shadow energy minister, Meg Hillier complained the DECC had been 'rolled over by the treasury at every turn' (Edie: <http://bit.ly/qF48Gv>).

**Nuclear.** In its response to the Energy and Climate Change Committee report on electricity market reforms, the government rejected allegations that the reforms include subsidies for nuclear power, saying incentive mechanisms do not amount to a subsidy (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/quvuFz>).

**Wirescapes.** A project to remove electricity poles and bury lines from an area of outstanding natural beauty in Cumbria (BBC: <http://bbc.in/nps6cf>). Somerset MP Tessa Munt has introduced a Ten-Minute Rule Bill, which will require factors other than cost to be considered for power lines (TI Somerset: <http://bit.ly/qyW0c2>). As she rose to speak, the Commons emptied (below). The second reading will be on 25 November 2011.



**Energy National Policy Statements.** The House of Commons voted to approve the government's six energy National Policy Statements, which define nationally significant infrastructure. They are the first of the national policy statements to be designated (DECC: <http://bit.ly/mPFmai>; Angus Walker: <http://bit.ly/nVZASM>).

**Wind.** Nearly half of all onshore wind farms in England are refused planning permission. Thirty two applications out of a total 66 for onshore wind farms were turned down last year, the lowest number of successful applications since 2005 (Independent: <http://ind.pn/qXFBzn>; Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/o3wzbb>).

The **Renewable Heat Premium Payment** scheme will give householders grants of up to £1250 towards the cost of renewable heating systems (EEN: <http://bit.ly/n0CAM5>).

**Gas.** Dozens of new gas-fuelled power stations are being planned by energy companies, triggering concerns of a new 'dash for gas' that could crowd out wind and other cleaner energy projects (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/ruGMNS>). Council leaders are urging the Welsh Government to form a policy on shale gas exploration (BBC: <http://bbc.in/oiF1gq>). The latest energy statistics show a 30% rise in use of imported gas. Friends of the Earth said: 'Only a switch to clean British power and slashing energy waste will cut fuel bills and secure our energy in the long run' (<http://bit.ly/nTx7Qh>).

**Waste strategy.** Conservative MP Zac Goldsmith has attacked the government's controversial waste strategy, accusing Defra of delivering a regressive waste review that will do little to reduce the environmental impact of the UK's waste. Goldsmith said the strategy is overly reliant on voluntary agreements with businesses to curb waste levels (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/poiJQ8>).

## RURAL AFFAIRS

**Rural Advocate.** David Cameron faces a revolt from coalition backbenchers who claim government risks falling into the trap of believing the countryside is a 'chocolate-box' playground for the rich. Lord Newton of Braintree, a cabinet minister in the Thatcher and Major governments, dismissed as 'complete and utter rubbish' the idea that the new Rural Communities Policy Unit in Defra could replace the Rural Advocate (Independent: <http://ind.pn/oGiQfg>).

**Green village.** The villagers of Llangattock, Powys, have been awarded £100,000 by the British Gas Green Streets Challenge for being the country's most innovative green community (Mirror: <http://bit.ly/nKBYmL>).

**Broadband.** Ofcom said it is considering using the airwaves vacated by FM to provide rural broadband services (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/pgqITW>). Ofcom has ordered BT to cut the prices it charges other broadband customers, in a move that could see rural broadband costs fall (BBC: <http://bbc.in/pgt2tF>). The government is consulting on revising the Industrial Development Act to include telecommunications and broadband in the definition of the basic services toward which the government can contribute towards in a development area (BIS: <http://bit.ly/mXNs9E>).

## CPRE South East Special eBulletins

As the government drives through planning system changes, we are keeping everyone up-to-date with a series of special editions of the eBulletin. The most recent are:

- ◆ **National Planning Policy Framework.** The Consultation Draft: <http://bit.ly/nppfcon>.
- ◆ **Natural Environment White Paper:** <http://bit.ly/newpcpre>.

## Food and Farming

**Glass and Plastic.** CPRE Sussex has renewed its campaign against plans to build 52 acres of glasshouses in Almodington, which will have a significant impact on the nearby Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The plans were rejected earlier this year but an appeal is expected (Chichester Observer: <http://bit.ly/rt3f2I>). Hugh Lowe Farms, near Tonbridge, Kent, won its battle for retrospective planning permission keep polytunnels on 400 acres of Kent countryside (BBC: <http://bbc.in/qjNRkS>).

**More Plastic.** Plastic bag use by supermarkets has grown by 5% in the last year. Retailers blame the 1.5% growth in retail trade and 'changed shopper habits', but many stores have dropped a commitment to remove single-use bags from view at checkouts. There was a decline in bag use in Northern Ireland and Wales, countries which have legislated to cut carrier bag use. Recycling minister Lord Henley said that the government is now considering forcing retailers to act. CPRE said ministers had to do better. The British Retail Consortium dismissed the efforts to reduce plastic bag use as 'a distraction' (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/qaedAA>; <http://bit.ly/przbWH>. Daily Mail: <http://bit.ly/oqnqrE>; <http://bit.ly/ow3upu>).

**Badgers.** Caroline Spelman said she was 'strongly minded' to allow controlled culling in England's hotspot areas. Farmers will pay for the cull, which will begin the south west and the government will contribute to the policing costs of expected demonstrations (Defra: <http://bit.ly/mZEADL>; Farmers Guardian: <http://bit.ly/n9LNUA>; <http://bit.ly/mTgtQU>). Natural England has challenged Defra on whether the proposed cull would breach the Bern Convention on wildlife preservation (Farmers Guardian: <http://bit.ly/n8xN1c>). The campaign group 38 Degrees, which campaigned against plans for the Nocton super dairy and against the forest sell off, has launched a petition against the cull following a series of online polls and debates. The League Against Cruel Sports and RSPCA also oppose the cull (FWI: <http://bit.ly/nzbwCL>). The former UK government scientific adviser Lord Krebs, who conducted a 10 year trial into culling, said the trials prove culls are not an effective way of controlling bovine TB (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/nax1cM>). Groups of farmers would find it onerous to comply with Natural England's requirements and the cull will open up a legal bag of nails (FWI: <http://bit.ly/rhMftg>).

## CAMPAIGNING

**Sir Roy Strong** features Goudhurst in the Kentish Weald in his quaint vision of rural England (BBC: <http://bbc.in/qXIqv3>).

**Protestors cleared.** The convictions of 20 environmental protesters for attempting to shut down Ratcliffe-on Soar power station were quashed the court of appeal ruled that crucial evidence recorded by police spy Mark Kennedy had been withheld (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/oFHNLA>).

**Marsh Award.** Stop Bristol Airport Expansion received the Marsh Award for the Benefit of Rural England from CPRE president Bill Bryson (TI Bristol: <http://bit.ly/qQ9NiQ>).

## About CPRE SE eBulletin

*The CPRE South East eBulletin is issued monthly, with special editions as needed. We cover all the planning and environmental news with a relevance to the remit of CPRE. Views expressed are those of the editor, not of any part of CPRE. Our audience is CPRE and its friends. Please feel free to circulate this eBulletin. If you are not on our circulation list and want to receive the eBulletin regularly, just let me know at [cprenews@gmail.com](mailto:cprenews@gmail.com). Andy Boddington*