

## CPRE South East eBulletin

### And the Rest of the News for September

#### Contents

Planning and Housing	1
Planning	1
Housing	1
Green Belt	2
Landscapes & Environment	2
The March of the Pylons	4
Energy & Climate Change	4
Waste and Water	5
Transport	5
Food and Farming	6
Rural Affairs and Communities	6
Campaigning and Politics	6

## PLANNING AND HOUSING

### Planning

**Planning reform.** Angus Walker reviews the government's progress on introducing planning reforms, and finds that it is succeeding in delivering the coalition agreement, except on creating "a level playing field between small and large retailers" (<http://bit.ly/ndRNxS>).

**Infrastructure.** Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg announced that the government will speed up spending on forty infrastructure projects to "stimulate activity in the shorter term". He suggested they might include: rollout of high speed broadband; improvements to the efficiency of the national grid and rail network; and projects to reduce congestion on the road network, such as targeting pinch points on the M1 and the M25 (Politics: <http://bit.ly/q7b501>).

**Localism Bill.** The Planning Advisory Service published a guide to the implications of the Bill for local authorities (<http://bit.ly/peoDOx>). Angus Walker reviews in detail the progress of the Bill, including the community 'right to buy' (<http://bit.ly/omxKGI>).

**Change of Use.** Runnymede Council has robustly rejected the government's proposals to allow any change of use from commercial development to housing without planning permission (<http://bit.ly/n3GRAC>).

**Appeals.** The Financial Times reports that Eric Pickles has authorised building of more than 6,000 homes against the wishes of local councillors since the election. He sided with developers in 30 cases, including 12 housing developments totalling 6,117 homes, including a 1,900-home site in Crawley, 500 in Tilbury, 729 in Rainham, 530 in Andover, and 400 in Bude, Cornwall (<http://on.ft.com/pVoLua>). In Northamptonshire, residents are complaining that Eric Pickles is ignoring localism by overruling local opinion on housing at Raunds and nuclear waste at Kings Cliffe (FT: <http://on.ft.com/r92N5c>).

**Neighbourhood plans.** The government has announced 36 additional areas in which it will test out neighbourhood plans, being introduced through the Localism Bill, bringing the total of pilots to 126. The new areas include several localities in the South East (Inside Housing: <http://bit.ly/nr21bc>).

**Garden cities.** Grant Shapps, MP for Welwyn Garden City and housing minister, has called for the TCPA to help prepare the ground for a new generation of garden cities (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/qYraM5>).

**Core Strategies.** The Planning Inspectorate approved the Core Strategy for Rushmoor in Hampshire (Planning £: <http://bit.ly/nEF2w1>). In its draft Core Strategy, Reigate & Banstead has indicated it is aiming for 420 to 500 homes per year, half the 1,000 demanded by the South East Plan. Councillors say that some may have to be in the green belt (Get Surrey: <http://bit.ly/p97Q27>).

**Community Infrastructure Levy.** Newark and Sherwood District Council in Nottinghamshire is the first planning authority to agree a schedule of CIL development charges with the Planning Inspectorate. It will raise an estimated £35m over the next 15 years to help pay for community facilities (Planning Portal: <http://bit.ly/pASvGg>).

**Sustainable development.** The Welsh Assembly Government is considering an approach to sustainable development based on wellbeing: "this is not an exclusively 'green' idea. For us, SD is about taking the optimum development path for Wales over the longer term, with wellbeing and quality of life, fairly distributed, as our goal" (<http://bit.ly/oxFoda>).

**Permitted development.** The Chief Planner has written to local planning authorities (<http://bit.ly/pbntbi>) announcing regulations that give permitted development and advertising rights for charging points for electric vehicles, and for household micro wind turbines and air source heat pumps.

### Housing

**Housing 'crisis'.** The housing market will be plunged into crisis without government action to address the chronic under-supply of homes, the National Housing Federation said. It called for: "more government investment in affordable housing would stimulate a wider, faster economic recovery and help fix our broken housing markets" (BBC: <http://bbc.in/nQLDqt>). Just 25,171 new homes were granted planning permission during the second three-months of 2011, Stewart Baseley of the House Builders Federation said: "The figures clearly reveal that while the debate about planning is currently being hijacked by irresponsible scaremongering from anti-growth groups our housing crisis is set to worsen." CPRE's Kate Houghton said: "The cynical attempt by the volume house builders to blame the planning system for the drop in new builds and planning permissions over the last few years is astonishing" (Planning Portal: <http://bit.ly/oP2Vx3>). The number of homeless households rose 17% in 12 months (Inside Housing: <http://bit.ly/oHyzuJ>).

**Empty homes.** CPRE welcomed a statement by Communities Minister Andrew Stunell that the government is making £100m available for communities to bring back empty homes into use (CPRE: <http://bit.ly/pZUg8m>; CLG: <http://bit.ly/oD5sGc>). Councillors in the New Forest are calling for increased council taxes on the areas 1,516 empty houses (Salisbury Journal: <http://bit.ly/oA29LD>).

**Better homes.** Launching its Homewise campaign for better homes, the Royal Institute of British Architects said Britain's new-build homes are the smallest in Western Europe and many are too small for family life. The House Builders Federation retorted the report "publishes statistics in a vacuum and fails to ask the right questions" (BBC: <http://bbc.in/nxJVzq>; HBF: <http://bit.ly/r6WwFD>; RIBA: <http://bit.ly/pp8veG>; <http://bit.ly/pQMqIU>). Zero Carbon homes are in danger of becoming little more than an empty slogan because of the construction industry's failure to build to required standards, Communities minister Andrew Stunell admitted to the Lib Dem conference (<http://bit.ly/p2sTJR>). The Sustainable Construction Academy, SusCon, opened in Dartford, Kent (Construction News: <http://bit.ly/oOK9rd>).

**Home ownership.** David Cameron promised to increase the discount to council housing tenants taking advantage of the Right to Buy. Housing minister Grant Shapps said: “There will be no net loss of housing – this is a one for one policy” (Inside Housing: <http://bit.ly/ofq5CJ>; <http://bit.ly/pmpFoy>). A study by Oxford Economics predicts that homeownership in England will fall to 63.8% over the next 10 years, down from a peak of 72.5% in 2001. It also says prices will rise 21.3% over the next five years, from an average price today of £214,647 to £260,304 (Inside Housing: <http://bit.ly/oVq6W3>). Grant Shapps said that residential mooring on waterways would be eligible for the New Homes Bonus, and suggested that more moorings could help with the housing shortage (Inside Housing: <http://bit.ly/oUakLx>; Planning Portal: <http://bit.ly/qmWQ3t>).

**Dale Farm.** The issue of the part-illegal gypsy camp in Essex has proved intractable as it drags through the courts. “The council should ignore the UN, and send in the bulldozers” (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/qUPnqK>). “The country is convulsed with one of its periodic fits of rage over travellers”, Joan Bakewell said in the Telegraph (<http://tgr.ph/pgq4Wv>). Lewis Goodall from the IPPR said the: “Dale Farm eviction is the ugly side of localism. Both central and local government are failing in their roles as a guarantors of minority rights” (New Statesman: <http://bit.ly/phbvgH>). “It is a habitual absurdity that our Gypsy and Traveller population is viewed as a national vexation out of all proportion to the numbers” says Libby Brooks in the Guardian (<http://bit.ly/ql8jhv>).

**Around the South East.** Eric Pickles rejected plans by Cala Homes for 2,000 homes at Barton Farm, Winchester even though there was a clear shortfall in housing land supply and against the advice of his inspector saying the issue should be decided locally (BBC: <http://bbc.in/pPdbIb>). Plans for more than 400 homes on Newbury racecourse have been approved by West Berkshire council as the first part of a 1,500 house development (BBC: <http://bbc.in/oqCWxj>). Hampshire County Council is considering seeking a judicial review over neighbouring authority Wokingham Borough Council’s plans to create a 3,000 home ‘mini town’ at the former Arborfield Garrison site. The scheme is being opposed by the villagers of Eversley (Get Hampshire: <http://bit.ly/ppnAPj>). East Hampshire District Council is consulting on the revised masterplan for Whitehill Bordon eco town (BBC: <http://bbc.in/nkuG30>). Brighton & Hove City Council told Eric Pickles that town halls should have the power to stop providing discounts to second home owners (24dash: <http://bit.ly/r3cJfa>).

**Elsewhere.** Blackpool residents have been given permission challenge a 584 home development based on housing targets set out in the regional plan (Planning £: <http://bit.ly/oF4niN>).

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## GREEN BELT

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*Threats to the green belt are accelerating around the country.*

**South East.** After strong opposition from CPRE Oxfordshire, a planning inspector rejected a bid to redraw the boundaries of Oxford’s Green Belt because of the risk of “urban sprawl” from Wheatley to Cowley. South Oxfordshire DC had been trying to get Wheatley withdrawn from the green belt. It did succeed in getting the green belt redrawn around Berinsfield (Oxford Times: <http://bit.ly/qJ2Oqq>). Meopham residents, supported by CPRE Protect Kent are to march to stop more than 700 new homes being built on green belt and greenfield sites rich with wildlife under the Gravesham Core Strategy (Reporter: <http://bit.ly/oV459w>; Kent News: <http://bit.ly/nsmSVX>).

**North.** Bradford Regional City’s new Core Strategy includes green belt allocations and will be issued for consultation towards the end of the year (T&A: <http://bit.ly/no2M4I>; <http://bit.ly/rb6Gv9>). Gateshead Council is pushing for housing the green belt. Newcastle is also planning to build in villages in the green belt; the Green Party said: “in a year or two they’ll be back for another bite, and we will just end up with continuous urban sprawl” (BBC: <http://bbc.in/pxuQAw>). As the City of York begins its consultation on its Core Strategy, Osbaldwick Parish Council is to hold a parish poll on using additional 250 acres of greenbelt for housing development (<http://bit.ly/qM90zp>). A petition is being raised in Burscough, West Lancashire against a proposal to build 600 new homes on Green Belt land (O&S Advertiser: <http://bit.ly/oE2HC2>). John King for CPRE South Yorkshire questioned plans for a 120-acre Chinese theme park: “There’s concern about the visual impact that Shaolin temples will have on Rotherham’s greenbelt” (Inside Media: <http://bit.ly/pzfv1B>). Doncaster Council has agreed planning permission for a rail freight terminal in Rossington despite objections from CPRE about loss of green belt and transport issues (BBC: <http://bbc.in/qtt0XS>).

**Midlands.** Coventry City Council is to start work on a new core strategy that will rule out the construction of homes on green belt land around the city (Planning £: <http://bit.ly/orNPrh>).

**East.** Green belt land around Basildon, Essex is under threat from housing on land owned by Nottinghamshire County Council’s pension fund (Basildon Recorder: <http://bit.ly/q8oYtE>). Eric Pickles is calling for extra comments on the controversial Radlett rail freight proposal in the green belt outside St Albans and suggests the inquiry could be reopened (<http://bit.ly/o14Inx>). At Castle Point, Essex plans for hundreds of houses on green belt land were rejected by the Borough Council after a strong local campaign (BBC: <http://bbc.in/otREo>; YA: <http://bit.ly/nh0McC>; <http://bit.ly/oPWDBa>).

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## LANDSCAPES & ENVIRONMENT

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**National Parks.** Eleven organisations, including the park authority, the RSPB and the Forestry Commission, have joined forces to reverse the decline in heathland in the South Downs National Park (BBC: <http://bbc.in/p8KIQ3>; Argus: <http://bit.ly/quRcj4>). Trials have begun on greater local participation in the governance of national parks in the Lake District and North York Moors (Defra: <http://bit.ly/oPZxSb>). A Natural England proposal to extend the boundaries of the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District national parks is meeting territorial opposition from, among others, Lancashire councillors who do not want a Yorkshire park to intrude into their county (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/r6n43c>; Natural England: <http://bit.ly/oOuacU>). Plans for a kilometre long zip wire in the Lake District National Park have been rejected due to the harm to the landscape (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/n9kxT>). Northern Ireland is taking its first steps towards Special National Parks (Planning Portal: <http://bit.ly/n6xdUJ>).

**Bowling greens.** I guess that when the Communities Department planned its press release on bowling greens, it thought that there would be a shortage of planning news. The release claims that the Right to Buy in the Localism Bill and the Local Green Space designation in the NPPF will allow bowling clubs to protect greens from development. Some bowlers though think the government is talking out of its hat (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/ofXJ4C>; CLG: <http://bit.ly/n5dUdy>; Guardian: <http://bit.ly/pbdxge>).

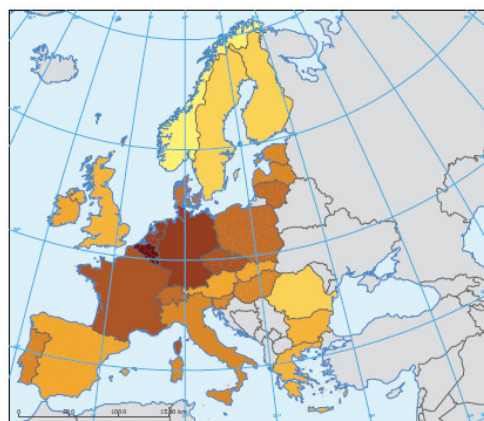
**Green space.** In the Sunday Mail, CPRE's Emma Marrington joins Kate Ashbrook of the Open Spaces Society expressing concern that the new Local Green Space designation will restrict new greens to 'chocolate-box spots in the heart of villages' with traditional features such as a maypole, duck pond or cricket pitch (<http://bit.ly/oyinv0>; see CPRE South East eBulletin: <http://bit.ly/cpresenppf>; Consultation closing date 17 October: <http://bit.ly/towngn>). The Communities Department has published a guide to funding sources for green spaces (<http://bit.ly/pIxREI>). In West Sussex, Littlehampton villagers are battling to get village green status for a field, to prevent any future housing development (<http://bit.ly/pT5nU7>). Campaigners who successfully gained town green status for Oxford's Warneford Meadow are hoping to buy the land (Oxford Mail: <http://bit.ly/p4X1xo>). The last green space in the Blackbird Leys estate in Oxford is also the centre of a town green battle (Oxford Times: <http://bit.ly/o2xaX2>).

**Trees.** In a sign of how difficult it might be for communities to succeed in protecting woodland if the Great Forest Sale goes ahead, residents raised £30,000 to save unspoilt woodland in Nailsea, only to be pipped by a £36,500 bid from property developer (TI Somerset: <http://bit.ly/qFyzQ5>). Launching an "how to" guide for people wanting to start their own community orchard, Eric Pickles praised Ringmer Community Orchard, near Lewes, which was set up by village residents in 2005 (Argus: <http://bit.ly/nWTeOd>; Guide: <http://bit.ly/o1QKdL>; Case Studies: <http://bit.ly/rpdrQ3>). Keith Kirby from Natural England said that the future well-being of the UK's oak trees could be at a crossroads due to Acute Oak Decline (BBC: <http://bbc.in/or85oU>). Protestors in Yorkshire lost a High Court battle to keep an ancient beech tree in the village of Irton (SEN: <http://bit.ly/nRWtbN>).

**Coastal path.** The Ramblers say that the coastal path has dropped to the bottom of the priority list. "The planning and design of the route is being delayed and there is a lack of commitment from those in power to create this wonderful path around the entire English coast" (Grough: <http://bit.ly/opJo2q>).

**"Wildlife needs a voice".** In the Independent, conservation Peter Marren regrets the silencing of Natural England as a voice for nature, accuses the RSPB, Wildlife Trusts and Wildlife Link of being silent on the issue, and suggests that they are too close to the government to protest (<http://ind.pn/q2gFWN>). In a following article, Michael McCarthy, the newspaper's environment editor says: "Prompted by the cold-eyed zealot who is the Cabinet Office Minister, Francis Maude – the man really responsible for the forestry sell-off fiasco – the Environment Department has abolished the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution and the Sustainable Development Commission, and laid down that on all matters of policy its green agencies, the Forestry Commission, the Environment Agency and Natural England, will henceforth Shut It" (<http://ind.pn/oKnNG8>; see also "The tangled bank": <http://bit.ly/oRAVIE>).

**Fragmentation.** Roads, motorways, railways, intensive agriculture and urban developments are breaking up Europe's landscapes into ever-smaller pieces, with potentially devastating consequences for flora and fauna across the continent, according to a joint report from the European Environment Agency and the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment. It says the UK has the some of Europe's highest levels of fragmentation around London, while the Scottish Highlands are some of the least fragmented areas. Overall the UK comes out well (<http://bit.ly/qVc2kq>).



**Fragmentation of landscapes in Europe**

Darker brown areas are the most fragmented

**Badger cull.** In its response to Defra's consultation on the proposed badger cull, Natural England has raised concerns about the scientific justification and practicalities of the policy. Its key concern is that the approach proposed by ministers is untried and deviates from that deployed in the Randomised Badger Culling [Krebs] Trial (FWI: <http://bit.ly/nwnZcb>). More than 65,000 people signed petitions against the cull (FWI: <http://bit.ly/qW66Qf>). The Daily Mail reported that Home Secretary had told Defra secretary Caroline Spelman to drop the cull during next year's London Olympics because there will not be enough police to deal with the expected protests (<http://bit.ly/nZWMde>).

**Ecocide.** In a mock trial hosted by green groups, two of the world's biggest multi-national corporations were convicted by a jury of "ecocide" at the Supreme Court in London for destroying global ecosystems (Independent: <http://ind.pn/rgU1Ua>).

**Rivers.** With a sense of timing, the Environment Agency released its list of the ten most improved rivers, including the River Thames, London (<http://bit.ly/nEKddp>). Days later Thames Water warned comedian David Walliams who was swimming the length of the Thames that it had released 500,000 cubic metres of raw sewage into the river (BBC: <http://bbc.in/nyNtjj>).

**Pollution.** New York documentary film maker Ian Cheney is winning awards for 'The City Dark', a film that intends to raise awareness about light pollution in urban cities, but it is not clear if the film is coming the UK (<http://www.thecitydark.com/>). A judge ruled that Defra must face a judicial review for arguably failing sufficiently to reduce nitrogen pollution levels (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/nEqcDT>).

**Litter.** Stop the Drop public cigarette bins are being raided in Dorchester, allegedly by 'vagrants' (Dorset Echo: <http://bit.ly/qxkMTZ>). "Why do so many people in Britain drop litter?" asks Theodore Dalrymple in his new book called Litter (Daily Echo: <http://bit.ly/q15mUw>).

**Heritage.** A report from English Heritage, the Association of Local Government Officers and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation has shown that there has been a 22% reduction in built heritage staff (conservation officers and archaeologists) since 2006 (Helm: <http://bit.ly/pNp6UY>).

**Waterways.** Defra is conducting an additional consultation on transfer of British Waterways to a charity, including how the government will work with the charity to secure and safeguard public benefits, including free access to the towpaths, protecting heritage and local wildlife (<http://bit.ly/mTABnZ>).

## THE MARCH OF THE PYLONS

*Protests against National Grid's plans for new, bigger overground power lines are growing around the country.*

**Design.** A shortlist of six new designs for electricity pylons were unveiled (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/oC3ACH>; Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/plzqld>; BBC: <http://bbc.in/qMsrvP>; Economist: <http://econ.st/p3kePw>; DECC: <http://bit.ly/qVCWr0>).

**Politicians.** Coalition MPs and ministers are beginning to raise their voices against National Grid's plans for huge pylons across the countryside. Defence Secretary Liam Fox wrote to Energy Secretary Chris Huhne about plans for Somerset and LibDem Tessa Munt has added her voice to the protest (BBC: <http://bbc.in/pl6Tlu>; Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/qZ3J31>). CPRE Protect Kent welcomed Fox's letter: "It's great that such a senior member is firmly on our side and fantastic that elements of the Government are thinking about the longer term impacts on the landscape by these developments" (<http://bit.ly/qU5HVJ>).

**South East.** CPRE Protect Kent welcomed the lowering of threats to the county from pylons after a new nuclear power station at Dungeness was dropped by it remains worried by a potential line of pylons in East Kent (Kent News: <http://bit.ly/qcShjr>).

**Around the country.** "Why must green power mean a 160ft pylon next to my home?", says Sarah Oliver of Stour valley. Why does it have "to desecrate land so lovely when it could potentially be hidden" (Daily Mail: <http://bit.ly/qxFPBy>). Scottish Power has rejected to calls to bury the Beaulieu-Denny power line in the area around Stirling (BBC: <http://bbc.in/pzCvyk>). As councillors objected to the possibility of pylons in the Lake District, Penrith and the Border Conservative MP Rory Stewart backed National Grid saying: "How much more is the public prepared to pay in order to protect the landscape and national parks, in order not to live under electricity pylons?" (BBC: <http://bbc.in/oF0mXC>). South Norfolk Council said the National Grid must underground cables from to bring power onshore from Lowestoft and it is beginning a campaign against a double line of electricity pylons across south Norfolk (Diss Express: <http://bit.ly/qYYjQs>). Campaigners who want a 37 mile high voltage line buried underground held a protest rally as National Grid announced an above ground route in Somerset (TI Somerset: <http://bit.ly/mX67Zs>). Parts of an upgrade to the power network between Somerset and Bristol will run underground through sensitive areas, National Grid said (BBC: <http://bbc.in/rhsA6J>). Wales' First Minister Carwyn Jones promised to fight Mid Wales' corner in the battle to prevent the construction of 400kv pylons across Powys (<http://bit.ly/qAFqAD>).

## ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE

**Climate Change.** The Green Alliance said the coalition has made good progress on only seven of 29 commitments set out in its programme for government 16 months ago and government's commitment to its low-carbon agenda is being hampered by vague strategies and a lack of cross-departmental cohesion (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/qEdqoh>; Report: <http://bit.ly/nUUutx>). Writing in Politics Magazine, Energy and Climate minister Greg Barker said that David Cameron's declaration that the coalition would be the greenest government ever "was no idle promise" (<http://bit.ly/qjuAt9>). DECC is consulting on reducing burdens on business from 'the complexity and overlap of climate change industry policy' (Closing date: 28th October 2011: <http://bit.ly/qstKqE>).

**Energy efficiency.** Ben Moxham, ex-BP energy adviser to David Cameron, has warned that claims by Chris Huhne, the Energy Secretary, that rises in gas and oil prices will be offset by people using less power are "unconvincing" and that government policies will add 30% to the cost of family energy bills (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/qa146I>; Business Green: <http://bit.ly/qGCFRN>). Twenty-four buildings were open during this year's CPRE Norfolk Green Buildings in Norfolk event (GBP: <http://bit.ly/p615Se>; News24: <http://bit.ly/rqSNq4>).

**Renewables.** Renewables generation contributed 9.6% of the UK's electricity supply in the second quarter of 2011, a 50% rise on 2010 (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/pFGCEM>). The Sunday Telegraph leader said "the Government's policy on renewable energy is based on dogma not evidence... But the truth is that you can't meet a country's energy needs from dogma" (<http://tgr.ph/onCdJV>). Tidal power, long the Cinderella of renewables, is moving towards large scale generation as turbines are deployed in France (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/qzXdO>). A survey by Barclays reports that two in every five UK farmers are expecting to invest in renewable energy (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/tp2WX0>). A YouGov survey found that 61% of homeowners would consider installing technology such as solar PV panels, hydro power or using biomass fuel to generate their own energy (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/qBfOTn>).

**Wind.** Wind industry body Renewable UK said the introduction of local referendums in the Localism Bill could cause massive delays and lead to thousands of wind projects being abandoned (TI Money: <http://bit.ly/nmmrZ8>). The Forestry Commission is tendering for clearance of young forest for potential wind farms. The area is up to 386 hectares, though the sites do not yet have planning consent (Wales Online: <http://bit.ly/phOjci>).

**Wind: South.** Researchers said offshore wind farms in Kent could have a positive impact on marine species (Your Canterbury: <http://bit.ly/pGPErH>). The Dorset Energy Group of local authorities has found that a 'maximum scenario' of 360 new turbines alongside other sources would create enough power to exceed the national target of 15% of the power used by the county, but their more 'realistic' and 'medium scenario' of 180 turbines alongside a combination of solar panels, hydropower schemes and other projects would create close to 12.5% (Dorset Echo: <http://bit.ly/poQDxa>).

**Wind: North and Scotland.** Energy secretary Chris Huhne has told the North East to learn to love "beautiful" wind turbines and called for hundreds more to be given the go ahead (Journal: <http://bit.ly/qzBLL0>). Energy companies have purchased mobile radar systems to assuage Ministry of Defence objections to winds farms across the Northumberland and the Scottish Borders and in the North Sea off Norfolk (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/mZAEfH>). The Crown Estate has granted concessions for three more offshore wind farms off Scotland and Humberside (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/qVD9XS>). A Scottish wind farm has been paid £1.2 million not to produce electricity for eight-and-a-half hours, £999 per megawatt hour of energy not produced to prevent the grid overloading (<http://tgr.ph/nS5xV3>). E.ON UK has begun consultation on proposals for between 25 and 45 turbines in County Durham (Planning Portal: <http://bit.ly/onr6iB>). In the category of you couldn't make it up, Donald Trump has written to First Minister Alex Salmond demanding that an offshore wind farm be rejected or the "useless eyesore" to be relocated away from his luxury golf resort (Scotsman: <http://bit.ly/qbdIbT>; <http://bit.ly/oEvHIF>).

**Wind: Yorkshire.** The landscape that inspired David Hockney's 1997 "The Road Across The Wolds" is threatened as applications flood in to build wind farms along the Wolds escarpments (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/q5vNlc>). East Yorkshire MP Greg Knight said: "These monstrosities are not saving the planet – they are trashing our countryside" (TI Hull: <http://bit.ly/os7DCK>).

**Wind: Elsewhere.** Two turbines in the West Midlands green belt have been rejected by a planning inspector (Stourbridge News: <http://bit.ly/oXfqWD>). Residents near a wind farm in North Devon say the noise is ruining their lives. One said: "It is like having tumble dryers in my bedroom" (TI North Devon: <http://bit.ly/oFiv57>). The government of Victoria, Australia is to amend planning laws to give households the power to veto wind turbines within two kilometres of their homes (Age: <http://bit.ly/rsEjzk>).

**Oil.** The coalition granted approval for two further offshore drilling projects off Scotland, to the fury of green groups (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/nTiQBP>).

**Fracking.** Energy firm Cuadrilla announced a find of 5.6 trillion cubic metres of gas in the Bowland shale under Lancashire, which could be recovered by the controversial fracking technique (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/qz2cQt>; Management Today: <http://bit.ly/oGqXJK>). The Wall Street Journal called it "Britain's second energy revolution" but some experts are not convinced by the data (WSJ: <http://on.wsj.com/o7sV3Y>; Reuters: <http://reut.rs/opkSE9>). The Guardian claimed the industry is set to be minimally regulated (<http://bit.ly/pQpV9G>).

**Biomass.** The government approved a 299MW biomass plant at Holyhead, Anglesey which will partly be fuelled by imports (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/n25ljx>).

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## WASTE AND WATER

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**Incineration.** Energy minister Charles Hendry gave his support for a greater uptake of energy-from-waste (EfW) incinerators (Edie: <http://bit.ly/qxKCEp>). Natural England has expressed concerns about the impact of the proposed King's Lynn incinerator on two environmental sites (Lynn News: <http://bit.ly/peRzss>). Shropshire Council told an appeal hearing that an incinerator overlooking the site of the 1403 battle of Shrewsbury is "the wrong development, in the wrong place, at the wrong time", even though Shropshire Council is meeting part of Veolia's appeal costs to against the council's initial decision to reject the incinerator (<http://bbc.in/q18QME>). Eric Pickles over-ruled local councillors and approved an incinerator at Severn Beach in South Gloucestershire (Gazette: <http://bit.ly/rpvxT>).

**Recycling.** Eric Pickles announced £250 million to encourage councils to return to weekly collections, a proposal met with derision by the waste industry and green groups who say it will reduce recycling (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/re5769>). David Cameron threatened to regulate single use carrier bags as usage grows (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/qTdq7s>). Bristol City Council approved a facility which will produce over 4.2 million litres of diesel from over 6,000 tonnes of end-of-life plastic (WMW: <http://bit.ly/n66PEH>). Lord Taylor of Holbeach has become waste and recycling minister at Defra (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/ocbxGF>). In an attempt to reduce food waste, Defra is banning "confusing" sell-by dates, though the retailers claim that consumer education would be more effective (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/mSKvXM>).

**Core Strategies.** Buckinghamshire County Council is consulting on its minerals and waste core strategy (Aylesbury Today: <http://bit.ly/pX9aMe>; BCC: <http://bit.ly/nk6UdU>).

**Water.** Thames Water has begun a major campaign to cut personal water consumption in the South East. Its headline that a third of women leave the shower running while they shave their legs caught media attention, but not without some derision from the Guardian which said "honing in on women shaving in the shower is a laughably dumb way to spread the message about water conservation" (PA: <http://bit.ly/rliS8j>; Guardian: <http://bit.ly/qUDnsF>). The company has also begun to burn sewage flakes to generate electricity (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/pee4XB>).

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## TRANSPORT

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**Aviation.** As the inquiry into the expansion of Lydd airport closed, the airport's owners said they could become big enough to save people a trip to Gatwick or Heathrow (BBC: <http://bbc.in/qLH2na>). Colin Matthews, chief executive of Heathrow operator BAA, said the airport must expand to keep its place in the international league of airport hubs (ES: <http://bit.ly/mU75DZ>; see also Reuters: <http://reut.rs/mUHMVF>). Simon Jenkins, writing in a personal capacity, paused from claiming the NPPF will concrete over the countryside to say: "development is a matter of balancing goods and evils" and the remaining "goods" of the Isle of Grain should be concreted over for a "vast fourth London international airport" (ES: <http://bit.ly/ovu2CF>). Meanwhile, plans for a Boris Island airport could be scuttled by threat of World War II bombs (<http://bit.ly/nOztKz>). The Department for Transport published its response to the Committee on Climate Change report on aviation emissions. Green groups complained it is backing away from cutting aviation emissions (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/rigxYH>; FoE: <http://bit.ly/nSX2Kx>). NASA is developing a new generation of airships to replace trucks, trains and ships as means of carrying freight. "You could imagine an airship landing in a field, loading produce directly and then delivering it anywhere in the world for much cheaper than we can today" (<http://tgr.ph/qQsupi>).

**Buses.** Passenger Focus published a study based on Shropshire and Herefordshire showing that "passengers who use rural bus services rely on them and their ability to get to the places they need or want to get to would be severely affected if these buses disappeared" (<http://bit.ly/qXr5Bz>).

**Rail.** The rail Initial Industry Plan set out ambitious new plans designed to slash the network's operating costs and reduce carbon emissions by 25% per passenger kilometre by the end of the decade. The IIP recommends £5.6bn of new schemes (Business Green: <http://bit.ly/oOkZUJ>). Network Rail published recommendations to tackle congestion at stations (Rail: <http://bit.ly/ny7Lly>).

**High Speed 2.** A survey by the Conservative Home website finds that HS2 is supported by 43% of Conservative members and opposed by 56% (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/nlmZOI>). CPRE's Ralph Smyth told the Transport select committee: "Greg Clark talked about improving policy by having involvement throughout the process. But we feel strongly that we haven't been involved throughout, which is why there has been the accusation of NIMBYism." He also told the committee there was no national strategy or context to judge HS2 against (LocalGov: <http://bit.ly/pJAmVY>). Transport Secretary Philip Hammond told the committee Britain's railways are a "rich man's toy" (BBC: <http://bbc.in/tjrE6U>). The Observer reported that backbench Tory MPs are joining celebrities in opposing HS2 (<http://bit.ly/pFYcRN>). The TaxPayers' Alliance said the HS2 project could end up costing the UK an extra £28 billion in hidden costs, including mitigating its environmental effect (<http://bit.ly/rpxv58>).

**Roads.** CPRE Norfolk is among campaign groups delivering than 10,000 cards to homes in Norwich in a campaign against the Northern Distributor Road for Norwich, which they say will wreck countryside and undermine sustainable transport (EDP24: <http://bit.ly/rsbZMC>). Greenpeace said: “The Saudi oil minister will rub his hands with glee”, as Phillip Hammond announced he was to raise motorway speed limits to 80mph, though he will also allow wider introduction of 20mph limits in urban areas (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/nVmbIW>).

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## FOOD AND FARMING

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**Supermarkets.** In the Sunday Telegraph, newscaster Selina Scott wrote about the battle against a superstore in Malton, North Yorkshire: “A scheme to build a vast superstore is a death sentence to this market town that boasts more than 100 independent shops, many of them here for generations” (<http://tgr.ph/p3sXWN>; <http://tgr.ph/pXD Sue>). As Tesco announced a price war, Defra Secretary Caroline Spelman pledged to protect farmers (<http://bit.ly/rfGcvR>). CPRE’s Neil Sinden told a fringe event at the Liberal Democrat conference that supermarkets are not doing enough to back local producers (FWI: <http://bit.ly/oOOy2k>). George Monbiot said: “Every government needs an Eric Pickles: a human wrecking ball who will swing wherever he’s told” before attacking Tesco’s expansionist plans. Tesco replied that it listens to communities and is a champion of democracy (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/nFgp8o>; <http://bit.ly/oUHptt>). Rumours that Tesco has cut the price of flying pigs are being denied as we go to press.

**Farming Deregulation Task Force.** Government officials should be sent to work on farms so they can see first-hand the consequences of their policy-making, the Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee said as it supported the Task Force’s recommendations on deregulation. The Task Force had also recommended that footpaths could be more easily diverted but the committee did not comment on this (Report: <http://bit.ly/pcPYES>).

**GM.** Defra approved a trial of genetically modified wheat at Rothamstead (<http://bit.ly/r6Sa6v>).

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## RURAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITIES

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**Rural exodus.** An exodus of families from the countryside, priced out of village life, threatens the future of schools, pubs and shops across rural Britain. Fifty-nine rural schools closed between 2005 and 2010, including six last year, despite a legal presumption against closure (Independent: <http://ind.pn/oQb1oz>). The Chronicle & Echo reviewed the problems of rural life in Northamptonshire. Sally Hanraham of CPRE Northants said: “The lack of buses puts a lot of pressure on people living in villages and there are people who don’t have transport or a village shop, as a lot of village shops and post offices have closed down” (<http://bit.ly/nNgeYP>).

**Stuart Burgess**, chairman of the Commission for Rural Communities said the Government only needs to look at rural communities for a good example of the Big Society. He also criticised the stance taken by CPRE and the National Trust on the NPPF (Darlington Times: <http://bit.ly/qMWk3d>).

**CPRE Dorset** took part in the national ‘Love Where You Live’ initiative in a bid to get people to take more pride over their local area (<http://bit.ly/r9U1bb>).

The **Village SOS** campaign has been launched with £5 million of Big Lottery funding to help villages revitalise pubs, cafes and arts and heritage centres (<http://www.villagesos.org.uk/>).

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## CAMPAIGNING AND POLITICS

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**CPRE.** Trevor Bevins, a former BBC presenter has taken over as the new director of Dorset CPRE (Dorset Echo: <http://bit.ly/oeWAnC>). Paul Badcock, CPRE activist and campaigner against gravel extraction in Dorset, has died (Telegraph: <http://tgr.ph/q8YB74>). CPRE Oxfordshire celebrated its 80th birthday (Oxford Mail: <http://bit.ly/pWzEp4>).

**Protest.** Twenty UK Uncut activists who had charges of aggravated trespass against them dropped two months ago have requested to revive their cases in “solidarity” with the 30 defendants who still face prosecution for occupying Fortnum and Masons. Prosecutors said the “I am Sparticus” defence was “very unusual” (Independent: <http://ind.pn/nHhVdl>; Guardian: <http://bit.ly/pzrwKx>). Students failed to get police kettling tactics ruled unlawful by the High Court, though the use of kettling is still limited by previous court judgements (Independent: <http://ind.pn/qVHupo>; Guardian: <http://bit.ly/n37mAI>). A further challenge to kettling is underway in the European Court of Human Rights (BBC: <http://bbc.in/oMBBozD>).

**Countryside Party.** At its conference, Labour leaders attempted to position it as the party of the countryside, warning that government plans will see wages cut for adult and child workers in rural areas (Guardian: <http://bit.ly/o40Anr>).

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### About CPRE SE eBulletin

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**Andy Boddington, Editor.**