



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
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Registered Charity no. 248304

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PRESS RELEASE

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Cheshire CPRE says 'Use your voice or lose your choice!'

Cheshire's countryside campaigners, CPRE[1], are using their appearance at this week's RHS Flower Show at Tatton Park to urge all of us to exercise our right to have a say in shaping our environment, or risk losing it altogether.

Roger Parkin, Joint Chairman of Cheshire CPRE, said, "We are encouraging visitors to the RHS Show to make sure they use their voice in responding to the recent Planning White Paper[2], which proposes that that local individuals and communities will have far less say in the building of Major Infrastructure Projects such as motorways, runways, power stations and waste incinerators. These issues are very important in Cheshire and Greater Manchester, especially in the area around the Tatton showground."

Visitors to the charity's stand in the Art and Garden Design Pavilion will be able to complete a response form asking the Government to amend the White Paper to deliver truly sustainable development and ensure a strong voice for local communities.[3]

CPRE is also concerned at proposals in the Planning White Paper to remove the 'needs test', used when deciding on applications for developments such as large supermarkets. "The needs test has helped to keep our towns thriving," said Mr Parkin, "and we fear its removal will result in even more large supermarkets driving independent traders from our rural villages and urban high streets." [4]

"The White Paper proposes a presumption in favour of development, to boost economic growth at the expense of the environment," he continued. "This is a short-term approach, that does nothing to meet the UK's climate change obligations, or to protect our natural environment in town and country for future generations."

CPRE is part of a coalition of civic and environmental organisations[5] representing over 5 million members, who are opposed to the Government's planning reforms, which they say will damage local democracy and threaten valuable landscapes, habitats, historic environments and local character. The Government is consulting on the reforms outlined in the Planning White Paper until 17th August 2007.

For more information on CPRE's campaign to retain local democracy in environmental planning, call the Cheshire CPRE Branch Office on 01606 835046, or visit their website at www.cprecheshire.org.uk

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

[1] CPRE, the Campaign to Protect Rural England, is a charity that promotes the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of rural England. We advocate positive solutions for the long-term future of the countryside. Founded in 1926, we have 60,000 supporters and a branch in every county. Our national President is Bill Bryson. Patron: Her Majesty The Queen.

[2] The White Paper, 'Planning for a Sustainable Future', was published on 21 May 2007 and produced jointly by Communities and Local Government, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Department for Trade and Industry and the Department for Transport. The White Paper sets out a wide package of reforms and is divided into two sections. The first half contains controversial proposals for reforming planning for Major Infrastructure Projects. The second half of the White Paper deals with streamlining other aspects of the planning system.

[3] Completed responses will be collected during the week of the show and forwarded to Government by CPRE's National Office.

[4] Cheshire CPRE campaigns on local foods and retaining local services such as Post Offices, shops and schools.

[5] The 14 members of the coalition are the UK's main environmental, conservation and civic organisations. They are: CPRE, Friends of the Earth, RSPB, The National Trust, Transport 2000, Airport Watch, The Civic Trust, The Wildlife Trusts, The Ramblers Association, The Grasslands Trust, The Council for National Parks, New Economics Foundation, Restore UK and UKRIGS. The coalition's website at www.planningdisaster.co.uk offers a facility for e-action

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