



Campaign to Protect
Rural England

CHESHIRE

PRESS RELEASE

Stephen O'Brien MP helps CPRE make local voices heard on Chester Green Belt

Stephen O'Brien MP[1] met representatives from Cheshire's Campaign to Protect Rural England[2] recently to receive comments in support of the Chester Green Belt, which the environmental charity collected from residents as part of its recent campaign to draw attention to threats to the Green Belt in Chester.

Cheshire CPRE's lottery-funded mailing campaign followed the 50th anniversary of the Green Belt last year[3], and aimed to ensure this much-admired institution for the protection of the countryside got its second half-century off to a good start. The mailing included a postcard for residents to use to tell the Government what the Chester Green Belt means to them.

The countryside campaigners were delighted to receive many comments in support of the Green Belt[4], together with generous donations to fund the charity's work, and welcomed new members in Chester district as a result of the campaign.

The final stage of the campaign took place when local MPs accepted the final batches of these postcards to pass on to the Government, making sure Chester voices are heard on this important issue[5].

Mr O'Brien, whose constituency includes a substantial Green Belt area, said he was very pleased to be involved, as he and his party firmly believe in the value of the Green Belt. 'Our Green Belt is of tremendous benefit, both to the surrounding countryside and to the City of Chester itself,' he said.

Ann Jones, CPRE's Chester planning coordinator[6], said, 'Our campaign has made people in Chester much more aware of the pressures on our Green Belt, and although we have now successfully brought this particular campaign to a close, I can assure you that our volunteers in Chester will go on working to protect the Green Belt in the future.'

For more information about Cheshire CPRE and Green Belt issues, call the CPRE Branch Office on 01606 835046, or visit the charity's website at www.cprecheshire.org.uk.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

[1] Stephen O'Brien is Conservative Member of Parliament for Eddisbury, His constituency covers a substantial area of the Green Belt around Chester, and most of the comments received were from residents in these constituencies.

[2] The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) was founded 80 years ago this year, and exists to promote the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of rural England by encouraging the sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country. For more information and archive of press releases see the CPRE Cheshire website at www.cprecheshire.org.uk and the national CPRE website at www.cpre.org.uk.

[3] The mailing was funded by the National Lottery Awards for All Scheme. 12,000 households in the Chester Green Belt received the mailing by post between 2nd and 21st January, and a further 1500 envelopes were hand-delivered by volunteers between December 2005 and March 2006.

[4] Green Belts in England were established in 1955, based on a concept proposed by CPRE, and following a long campaign by the charity.

[5] Samples of Chester residents' comments were sent out with the pre-event Press Briefing

[6] A statement by Ann Jones detailing current threats to Chester's Green Belt was sent out with the same Press Briefing