



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
CHESHIRE

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PRESS RELEASE

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CHESHIRE CPRE WELCOMES DEBATE ON FUTURE OF COUNTRYSIDE

A week after launching a report giving a bleak vision of our countryside in 30 years unless action is taken to save it,^[1] countryside campaigners CPRE^[2] are delighted with the debate it has ignited.

“Given current trends, our beautiful, diverse and tranquil countryside could be a shadow of its former self by the time today’s toddlers have young children of their own,” said Richard Bass, Chairman of CPRE’s Cheshire Branch, “But it’s not too late to change those trends.”

“In the Cheshire area, huge changes are being proposed. The “Northern Way” initiative will see areas we currently think of as rural swallowed up into vast “City Regions”, creating tremendous pressure to release Green Belt land for development. The concept of the tolled M6 Expressway has been raised again, despite the fact that a tiny proportion of the thousands of responses to the initial consultation was in favour. But as our report clearly states, this is about much more than just development. It’s also about the uncertainties surrounding farming and the certainty of climate change.”

Mr Bass concluded, “We’re also asking people to give us their own vision for the future through an online competition on our national website, ^[5] or by contacting the Cheshire Branch Office. We have to fight to protect the countryside as a valuable resource for all of us - as our report shows, once we’ve lost it, it’s too late to be sorry - and we’re looking for new members who share our concern and want to join in that fight.”

To enter the competition, visit www.cpre.org.uk. Copies of CPRE’s report and further information can be obtained from Debbie Janney, the Cheshire Branch Secretary, on 01606 835046, or by email: info@cprecheshire.org.uk.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. *Your Countryside, Your Choice* was launched on Friday, 9 September. CPRE's 44-page polemic, by Paul Kingsnorth, was given extensive coverage by national regional and local newspapers and broadcasters. The report begins with a scenario for what England's countryside could be like in 2035, given current trends, then analyses the threats facing the countryside and how they should be addressed. The report and accompanying press release can be obtained from CPRE's Press Office or direct from our website: www.cpre.org.uk.

2. CPRE 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. We promote positive solutions for the long-term future of the countryside to ensure change values its natural and built environment. Our Patron is Her Majesty The Queen. We have 60,000 supporters, a branch in every county, nine regional groups, over 200 local groups and a national office in London. CPRE is a powerful combination of effective local action and strong national campaigning. Our President is Sir Max Hastings.

3. Melvyn Bragg, Libby Purves and Joan Bakewell have added their voices – they can be found on CPRE's website at www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/landscape-and-beauty/countryside-futures/what-cpre-is-doing.htm.

4. As quoted in *The Times*, 9 September 2005.

5. Full details can be found from the home page of www.cpre.org.uk - the competition closes on 31 October 2005.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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