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NEWS RELEASE

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Photo attached:

Bill Bryson during his visit to Cheshire in October 2007.

Cheshire CPRE & Bill Bryson say ‘Stop the Drop’!

Cheshire CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England)[1] is calling on all residents to back its campaign to stamp out litter and fly-tipping. CPRE President Bill Bryson launched the nationwide ‘Stop the Drop’ campaign today (Wednesday) to urge everyone to put an end to what is an escalating problem according to the latest annual survey[2] by the Government litter watchdog, Encams. The North West scored badly on litter, and was the worst performing region nationally on cleanliness and cleanliness-related indicators[3].

All except one local authority in the North West were rated ‘unsatisfactory’ for their performance on litter. But they were not alone: not a single local authority in England was rated ‘good’. [4] Macclesfield Borough Council was one of only 69 local authorities in the 174 surveyed by Encams to manage a ‘satisfactory’ rating. Despite their obvious litter problems, many local authorities issued few fixed penalty notices for litter offences, and collected even fewer fines[5].

Bill Bryson said: ‘The bodies responsible for cleaning up litter and fly-tipping admit it is getting worse and many local authorities remain magnificently relaxed when it comes to doing anything about it. Littering is not a crime that has anyone quaking for fear of the consequences, because by and large there are no consequences.

‘None of us need stand idly by as our towns and countryside are trashed. Of course it is vital that people do not drop litter in the first place, but local authorities, central Government and other public bodies have a duty to clear it up and should all give a much stronger lead on the problem. We can all put pressure on them to do so.’

CPRE is calling for action:

Get answers: Ask your local authority what they are doing to clean up litter and fly-tipping in your area.

Get involved: Cheshire CPRE is looking for volunteers to work on the 'Stop the Drop' campaign.

Get informed: Sign up to support the campaign and receive Bill Bryson's e-bulletins, with information and campaigning updates

CPRE will be lobbying the Government for more leadership to tackle litter and fly-tipping. The countryside campaigners said the announcement in the recent Budget that supermarkets may have to charge to issue single-use plastic bags was a step in the right direction. They also welcomed the news this weekend of a pilot scheme to track down and fine those who throw litter from their cars [6]. CPRE is now calling for more litter bins to make tidiness easier, and a nationwide deposit system for drinks containers, to reward the public for returning used drinks containers, boost recycling and reduce litter.

According to CPRE, each household disposes of 500 plastic bottles a year (a total of 13 billion in the UK), but just 130 of these are recycled, meaning that 370 go to landfill, or into our streets, fields and hedgerows. A 10p deposit system on plastic bottles alone could therefore earn an average family £50 a year – just for returning their waste – while contributing to a cleaner environment.

Bill Bryson concluded: 'If you are bothered by a single piece of litter, or you're fed up with the blight of fly-tipping, or you're driven to distraction by the fact that litter costs a whopping £600 million and more a year to clear up, this is the campaign for you. Please join us as we fight to Stop the Drop.'

To get involved in Cheshire CPRE's 'Stop the Drop' campaign, visit the charity's website at www.cprecheshire.org.uk or call their Branch Office on 01606 835046 (9-12, Mon-Fri). You can sign up to Bill Bryson's e-newsletter at CPRE's national site: www.cpre.org.uk

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Notes for editors:

[1] The Campaign to Protect Rural England (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. 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

[2] Encams: Local Environmental Quality Survey of England 2006-7. The survey looked at a representative sample of 174 local authorities, so not all were rated.

[3] Above: page 15

[4] Litter & Fly-tipping statistics 2006/2007

Litter is measured in Standard Quality Intervals (SQI) – a quantitative measurement of levels of litter present. These are assessed as:

Good (a score of +8 to +5) Satisfactory (+4 to +1) Unsatisfactory (-1 to -4) Poor (-5 to -8).

Not one local authority surveyed achieved a 'Good' rating on litter. Even those given a 'Satisfactory' rating should not be complacent as there will still be litter in their areas that needs clearing up.

SQI for local authorities in Greater Manchester & Cheshire included in the survey

Local Authority	Litter overall	Rural roads
Chester City Council	Unsatisfactory (-2)	Unsatisfactory (-1)
Congleton Borough Council	Unsatisfactory (-1)	Unsatisfactory (-1)
Crewe and Nantwich BC	Unsatisfactory (-2)	Unsatisfactory (-3)
Ellesmere Port & Neston BC	Unsatisfactory (-2)	Satisfactory (1)
Macclesfield BC	Satisfactory (1)	Satisfactory (2)
Stockport MBC	Unsatisfactory (-2)	Satisfactory (1)
Trafford Council	Unsatisfactory (-2)	Unsatisfactory (-4)
Wirral MBC	Unsatisfactory (-1)	Unsatisfactory (-2)

Cheshire CPRE also covers the local authority areas of Halton, Warrington and Vale Royal, which were not included in the representative sample of 174 councils surveyed by Encams in 2006-7

Manchester, Greater Manchester, Merseyside & South Lancashire

Local Authority	Litter overall	Rural roads
Knowsley MBC	Poor (-5)	Poor (-6)
Liverpool City Council	Unsatisfactory (-3)	Unsatisfactory (-1)
Manchester City Council	Unsatisfactory (-2)	n/a
Salford City Council	Unsatisfactory (-2)	Unsatisfactory (-4)
Tameside MBC	Unsatisfactory (-2)	Unsatisfactory (-2)
Sefton Council	Unsatisfactory (-3)	Unsatisfactory (-4)
St Helens Council	Unsatisfactory (-4)	Unsatisfactory (-3)
West Lancs DC	Unsatisfactory (-2)	Unsatisfactory (-2)

The remaining 180 local authorities were surveyed between April 2007 and March 2008. Results will be available around June 2008.

Fly tipping incidents in the North West 2006-7 (from the Government's Flycapture database)

No of incidents	Incr/ decr from 2005/06	Cost of clean up	Main type of waste	Occurring mostly on	Average incidents / month	Number of successful prosecutions
1.4 m	2%	£21.7million	95% household	94% back alleys	117608	318

[5] A local authority is allowed to keep the revenue generated from issuing fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for litter. Local authorities can set the amount of the fixed penalty notice between £50 and £80. However, the default amount is £75. Failing to collect fines therefore means a weak deterrent *and* lost revenue.

The following calculations for 2006 - 7 are based on each authority issuing a £75 fixed penalty notice under Section 88 of the Environmental Protection Act, 1990 (as amended by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act, 2005).

The first column shows the local authority's ranking if it came in the top 25 for the number of fixed penalty notices issued. Manchester City Council issued more FPNs than any other local authority in England.

	Local Authority	Number of FPNs issued	Number of FPNs paid	Estimated loss of revenue (at £75 per unpaid FPN)
	Chester City Council	31	26	£375
	Congleton BC	9	7	£150
	Crewe & Nantwich BC	182	100	£6,150
	Ellesmere Port & Neston	0	-	-
	Halton BC	0	-	-
	Macclesfield BC	data	not	available
	Stockport MBC	216	128	£6,600
7	Trafford BC	1657	944	£70,800
	Vale Royal BC	0	-	-
	Warrington BC	15	11	£300
	Wirral MBC	data	not	available
1	Manchester City Council	2818	1557	£94,575
12	Liverpool City Council	757	185	£42,900
	Knowsley BC	21	0 (?)	£1,575 (?)
	Salford City Council	540	334	£15,450
	Sefton MBC	0	-	-
	Tameside BC	126	81	£3,375
	St Helens MBC	4	2	£150
	West Lancs DC	69	37	£2,400

[6] Front page story: The Times, Saturday 12th April. The pilot scheme will begin in London this summer. Evidence collected from CCTV footage, and reports by traffic wardens and members of the public who witness offences will be use to trace registered keepers of vehicles, who will receive fixed penalty notices by post.

Bill Bryson is available for interview on Tuesday 15 April / Wednesday 16 April. Please contact CPRE's National Press Office on 020 7981 2880 for his availability.

Statistical information on local authority performances on litter and fly-tipping and background briefing materials on litter and fly-tipping are downloadable from CPRE's National Office media centre: www.cpre.org.uk/news/media-centre (login – all lower case: user name: media, password: journalist). The media centre also contains downloadable photos and video footage of Bill Bryson litter picking.

Photos from Bill Bryson's visit to Cheshire / Greater Manchester in October last year are available from Clare Lewis, see below.

Further Information:

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