

Media and policy round up: 24 February 2017

Media highlights

**Please note The Times, Financial Times, The Sun and some articles on the Daily Telegraph website are now behind a pay wall, meaning you require a paid-for log-in to read them. Where no links are provided below, the coverage is not accessible online. Please contact national office for more details if you require them.*

CPRE Annual Lecture

CPRE's annual lecture took place on 20 February, with Housing Minister Gavin Barwell making his first speech since the launch of the Housing White Paper. The lecture was covered in [The Times](#), The Telegraph, [Planning Magazine](#) and [Inside Housing](#) (21 February). Shaun Spiers discussed the Housing Minister's speech in his blog '[Be positive: the Housing Minister's challenge to CPRE](#)'.

Planning

Chief executive Shaun Spiers spoke to Countryfile magazine about Government plans for new garden towns and villages across the country (11 February). Shaun said that, if well-planned, these could be preferable to the poor quality development currently seen in much of the countryside.

Planning campaign manager Paul Miner spoke to [The Times](#) about proposals in the Housing White Paper that could lead to an increase in Green Belt land being allocated for development (13 February). Paul argued that local authorities forced to set unrealistic housing targets will experience greater pressure to build on the Green Belt.

CPRE Berkshire trustee Patrick Griffin spoke to [The Times](#) about the threat to Green Belt land in Theresa May's constituency of Windsor and Maidenhead (13 February). Patrick warned of the risk of urban sprawl if Green Belt protections are ignored.

Paul Miner spoke to [The Times](#) about new appointments to the board of the Homes and Community Agency (22 February). Paul expressed concern that the board could be moving toward supporting more development of greenfield and Green Belt land.

Food and farming

Senior rural policy campaigner Graeme Willis wrote a letter to [The Times](#) arguing against a sudden halt in farming subsidies after Brexit (23 February). Graeme argued that such a move would undermine the quality of our food and the wider environment.

Litter

Litter programme director Samantha Harding spoke to [The Times](#) about Coca-Cola coming out in support of a deposit return scheme in Scotland (23 February). Samantha said she was hopeful that a

deposit return scheme for England would be next. Samantha was also interviewed on Sky News (22 February).

Rural affairs

Senior rural policy campaigner Graeme Willis wrote a letter to [The Telegraph](#) about the Government's planned raising of business rates (18 February). Graeme warned that rural communities where property values have been driven up by second homes and holidaymakers would see many small businesses close.

Policy and campaigns

The future for England's Road Network

Head of infrastructure and legal Ralph Smyth spoke at this conference held at the Caledonian Club in London. Other speakers included Highways England chief executive Jim O'Sullivan and Jill Adam, Director of Roads at the Department for Transport. In his presentation, Ralph argued that we need to:

- better evaluate road schemes after opening and learn from the results;
- ensure rural areas aren't left out from new transport technologies and
- restructure our transport networks fundamentally, if we are going to improve quality of life.

We will be publishing a major piece of research on roads in March, which looks again at the lessons of our 2006 report [Beyond Transport Infrastructure](#). We will be sending embargoed copies of the report and associated material in advance to branch press contacts.

Department for Transport roads stakeholder event

Early next year, the Department for Transport and Highways England are due to publish their plan for the second road investment strategy (RIS2) which will lead to major adjustments to England's road network between 2020 and 2025.

On 14 February, CPRE Campaigns and Policy Assistant James Bartholomeusz attended a RIS2 event hosted by the Department that brought together a wide range of roads stakeholders across the public, private and charity sectors. Along with other environmental groups, James was able to express concerns about the damage likely to be caused by a significant upswing in road-building over the next few years.

Greener UK launch

Greener UK, a coalition of 13 major environmental organisations, including the CPRE, last week launched its [manifesto](#) calling on the UK Government to restore and enhance the environment as part of its plans for leaving the European Union.

The launch was held in parliament and there were speeches from Defra Minister George Eustace, Brexit Select Committee Chair Hilary Benn and Henry Smith MP.

A soundbite on the manifesto launch can be found [on our website](#).

Housing White Paper consultation

A reminder to branches about the [branch consultation](#) on the Housing White Paper, which was launched on Tuesday 21 February. Next week we will be sending branches more details about the event on 29 March to discuss input to the consultation.

For any questions related to the Housing White Paper, please email campaigns@cpre.org.uk.

Branch development

Annual Mailing 2017

Branches should have now received the annual mailing. We are asking you to check the staff and volunteer spreadsheet, fill in the questionnaire, and then send them back together with the other requested documents by **Monday 20 March**. If you have any questions, please contact Anna Mathieson (annam@cpre.org.uk; 0207 981 2845) or Sara Bertrand (sarab@cpre.org.uk).