



# *The Balancing Act*

Protecting the countryside  
alongside renewable  
energy development

# An Introduction to CPRE

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- CPRE Profile and Approach
- Ways of working and campaigning
- Role in protecting the Countryside
- Attitude to energy policy
- Consider the role of Renewables
- How policy conflicts may be resolved

# CPRE Profile

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- CPRE is a membership organisation and charitable company
- 1926: Royal Patron and Trustee Board
- Policy Committee with experts 3 years
- Sponsorship from BT, Berkeley & Safeway
- Media Awards Charity Annual Report twice

# CPRE's approach

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- Adopts a campaigning style
- Works nationally, regionally and locally
- Champions rural character and diversity
- Often teams up with other groups
- Believes in partnership
- Grass roots opinion matters

# CPRE's achievements

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- Promoted National Parks and AONBs
- Fostered Green Belt for urban planning
- Launched campaign on urban footprints
- Countryside character assessment
- Promotes public interest in rural scene

# The Countryside

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- A Living Countryside not framed picture
- Affordable Housing while protecting greenfield sites
- Support for sustainable development
- Prudent use of natural resources
- Protect the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of the countryside

# Energy policy

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- South East Renewable Energy Strategy
- CPRE believes in the vision and aims of the strategy
- Conserve energy and reduce demand
- Targets for 2016 and 2026 to be higher
- Eventual 14% target and set an optimum to motivate organisations

# Sustainable Construction

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- Working with Environment Agency and SEEDA (Building for Nature project)
- Water and Energy resources
- Minimise impact of extractive industries
- Better on-site use of C&D materials
- Good practice and innovation
- High quality design and sustainability

# Climate Change and the Countryside

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- Work with the South East Climate Change Partnership
- Adaptation to new risks and changes
- Impact on water resources, landscape and biodiversity
- Coastal erosion and managed retreat
- Develop low carbon economy

# Energy White Paper

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- Increased energy efficiency, building and product standards
- Sustainable locations for development
- End fuel poverty
- Reliability and competitiveness
- Markets for energy services
- Invest in energy efficient technologies

# Energy Policy in the Region

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- Renewable Energy Strategy - changes to planning guidance (RPG9)
- Vision White Paper targets and drivers
- Integrating Planning and Energy
- Regional potential and targets
- Spatial sub regional targets
- Plan for Renewable Energy Resources

# Role of Renewables

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- Regional Renewable Energy Assessments bold and optimistic
- Many Renewables (biomass & biofuels)
- 620MW of installed capacity by 2010
- Biomass, offshore and onshore wind has largest potential
- All areas have potential to contribute

# Impact on the Countryside

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- Not at cost to the local environment
- Loss of countryside character
- Protected areas of landscape value
- Landscapes are economic assets to rural areas
- Industrialisation of the countryside
- Designated areas of national value

# Wind power

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- Can wind turbines ever fit into an AONB?
- Intrusive structures will not get support
- A new 21st century landscape
- Most economic renewable technology
- Sequential approach to save landscapes
- Avoid detrimental impact on countryside
- On shore wind use possible in right place

# Issues remain unresolved

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- Green issues versus the countryside
- Save the planet and the countryside
- Subjective or objective attitudes
- Preservation alone is not the answer
- Visual impact is important
- Not just amenity but scenic value

# Finding ways forward

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- Start with more efficiency and less waste
- Low public perception of renewables
- A mix of renewables suited to the surrounding environment
- Less dominance of wind power
- Energy crops within rural diversification
- Local and community benefits essential

# Moving forward

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- Sound regional policies are emerging
- Better guidance for local authorities on planning for renewables (PPS22)
- CPRE has prepared Ten Tests
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Small scale embedded energy schemes
- Encourage better public participation

# Conclusions

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- Harnessing the elements should be objective in the South East
- Low carbon economy is critical
- Potential may be unachievable due to planning pressures
- Bring together energy and planning
- Energy and countryside are compatible
- Need to work together to find solutions

# Summary

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- CPRE takes strategic view of energy policy and supports broad objectives
- Low carbon and climate change are real
- The countryside is a vital resource
- Better understanding of environment
- Sustainability requires integration rather than balancing act

# Contact

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