



Campaign to Protect
Rural England

Campaigning for the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of the countryside

www.cpre.org.uk

Integrating Carfree Developments with Rural Areas & the Natural Environment



Ralph Smyth, CPRE
Towards Carfree Cities IX
June 2010, York



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About CPRE

- Established in 1926
- President: Bill Bryson, Patron: HM The Queen
- Sustainable use of land in town and country
- Focus is on rural and planning issues
- Structure: National Office, regions, independent county branches & district groups
- 60,000 supporters, plus nearly half all parish councils & 2,000 amenity societies are affiliated

CPRE's *2026 Vision for the Countryside* (2009) calls for:
“a decline in the ‘hypermobility’ that characterised the early years of the century”, a revitalisation of rural railways, more walking & cycling



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Why should carfree campaigners care about the countryside?

- Fifth of UK population live in rural areas, more elsewhere
- Weekend driver syndrome: still 'need' a car 24/7
- Problem of urban access for those wanting to drive in

Longer term:

- Day-to-day contact with nature is important for psychological well-being
- Marketing approach to behaviour change or value-shift to inclusive self-identities?





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Mobility vs. accessibility

- Nature reserves and new transport links to them
- ...or reduce need to travel & integrate nature into daily life
- Plan for accessible (natural) greenspace in urban areas
- Revisit ways of calculate density but don't abandon targets
- Greenways give physically active modes unique selling points over over driving and public transport





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Density & Green Belts

- Do density targets mean cramming more people into the urban area, with less access to nature?
- How should we calculate density? Problems of ‘garden grabbing’, access to greenspace etc.

Green Belts are a powerful planning tool.

- They stop sprawl and promote urban regeneration.
- 14 in England cover 13% of land.
- Clear edge between town & country: space to grow local food, access nature and reduce urban footprint.





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Nature Deficit Disorder & ANGSt

- Louv, *Last Child in the Woods*, 2005: children kept 'safely' out of nature
- Access to Natural Greenspace Standards (published by Natural England)
- Every home should be within 300 m of an accessible natural greenspace of at least 2 ha; 20 ha site within 2 km; 100 ha site within 5 km; 500 ha site within 10 km
- Assess supply of greenspaces (accessible & other) then their naturalness, then connection → plan for long-term improvements

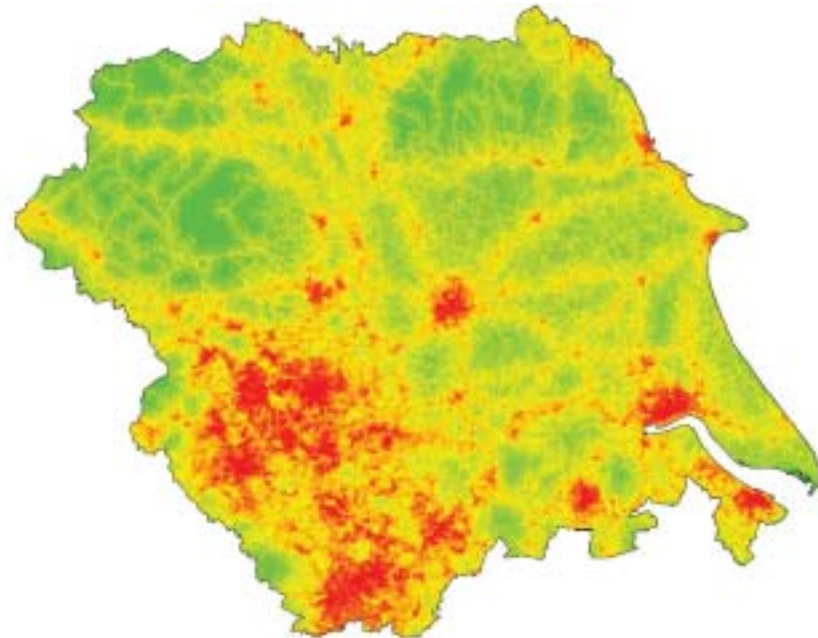


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Naturalness & tranquillity

- Naturalness = giving nature a free reign
- Tranquillity = 'getting away from it all' (sounds & sights of humankind)

Impact of roads clearly visible on Yorks & Humber tranquillity map. Road noise top as biggest public dislike.



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Car free access to countryside

- Give **comparative advantages** to carfree choices: cost, ease, convenience, enjoyment!
- **Better public transport services**: integrated timetables, information & ticketing. Good for those in rural areas as well as those trying to get to them.
- **Tackle severance and intimidation**
- **Hierarchy or systems approach to road network**: reduce motor speeds and flows; build separate facilities along busier roads, integrate with separate motor traffic free network.





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Rural filtered permeability

- Traffic rising fastest on rural roads, where speed limits highest and congestion the least.
- SatNav means direction sign strategies no longer enough.

Filtered permeability means limiting route options more for larger vehicles.

E.g. Lorry Control Zones, no motor vehicles 'except for access', peak/ weekend car closures or charging.

English Rights of Way network is an ancient example.





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Promoting carfree trips to countryside

- Barriers: information, ticketing, cost, fear of motor traffic, 'not for us'
- Solutions: green gateway hubs, cycle hire, parking charges subsidising , coach services, carfree weekend events & rides, marked trails, 'give the driver a break' campaign

- *Green Access Guide to Countryside Recreation*: Natural England & EEDA: Leisure Travel Planning & Green Access Audits
- www.vistrav.org.uk Sustainable Leisure Travel Network





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Carfree living in the countryside

- In England, about 10% of rural households do not own a car
- But at any one time about half of people in rural areas do not have access to a car

So carfree is already possible:

- Near regular transport, e.g. rail halts or main bus routes between towns
- With local shops, services and deliveries for other food and other supplies. Rural car clubs.
- Focus new housing to give critical mass to existing settlements and their services.



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Towards carfree countryside?

- Integrated approach needed
- If it's possible in rural areas, it's more probable in urban areas!
- Carbon emission reduction targets and peak oil mean we need to start now

...but even if a perpetual motion machine is invented tomorrow, there are many other reasons why

