

## ***Abolition of Regional Strategies***

As so many residents living in North Bournemouth know, we were waiting to hear from the previous Government if the Green Belt from Throop through to Holdenhurst would fall into its plans for 1,500+ new housing units as was approved by the Regional Assembly some two years ago. With the election of the new Conservative/Liberal Democrat Government coalition, we are informed by the new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government that it is its intention to rapidly abolish Regional Strategies and return decision-making powers on Housing and Planning to local councils; this has to be great news in protecting our Green Belt. In the Secretary of State's letter to all local authorities [please see details below contained in the letter from the Rt. Hon. Eric Pickles, MP. dated 27 May to Local Planning Authorities setting out his instructions] where he makes it clear that he will expect Local Planning Authorities and, more so, the Planning Inspectorate to have regard to his letter as a material planning consideration in any decisions that are currently being taken; he also makes reference to the provision of travellers' sites.

[At present I cannot add any more to this information but, as always, I will most certainly keep residents informed of any further news which will be published on our website: <http://www.peoplebeforepolitics.info> and in future newsletters.]

*“Dear Chief Planner, 27 May 2010      ABOLITION OF REGIONAL STRATEGIES*

*I am writing to you today to highlight our commitment in the coalition agreements where we very clearly set out our intention to rapidly abolish Regional Strategies and return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local Councils. Consequently, decisions on housing supply (including the provision of travellers' sites) will rest with Local Planning Authorities without the framework of regional numbers and plans.*

*I will make a formal announcement on this matter soon. However, I expect Local Planning Authorities and the Planning Inspectorate to have regard to this letter as a material planning consideration in any decisions they are currently taking. Yours, [signed] THE RT. HON. ERIC PICKLES, MP.”*

## ***Throop Hatches [Sluice Gates]***

With the completed works to restore the Hatches at the Weir Bridge by the Environment Agency, and funding made available by Dorset County Council for the path to the main Weir bridge, we are now waiting for a start to the south-eastward path that runs from the main Weir bridge for the surfacing of the path that runs parallel to the river by Dorset County Council.

Sadly we have nothing more to add on Throop Mill. Over so many years I have been sending endless emails/correspondence, etc., for a Visitor Centre, supported by other attractions like a Craft/Organic Shop, Cafeteria, etc. What a great and lovely spot to relax in with the surrounding countryside and also remembering that the Mill still retains much of the original machinery.



## ***South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Document***

With the publication of this 136-page document, I have set out the section on our website, pages 108-113, that makes reference to the Stour Valley, Throop Mill, Hicks Farm and Stour Acres Barn, and the Connect 2 Sustrans project of the river crossing at Pig Shoot (bridleway) - the only thing missing here is the funding. I have raised a number of the areas mentioned in the document with the relevant Officers who were involved in drawing up the study. Again, comments are on the website but I am happy to provide a copy of the information on those pages or e-mail to any residents wishing me to do so.

[Please see the website for information on the S.E. Dorset Green Infrastructure Study, especially pages 108-110]

## ***Countryside Service, Stour Valley Supporters***

One must pay enormous thanks to the many residents who give up valuable time as volunteers in the maintenance of the Stour Valley and other such protected sites of special scientific interest in the Borough. Existing staffing levels in the countryside team have now reached the limits of their capabilities and any further staff reductions in this very small team would have serious consequences for this Council in fulfilling its statutory obligation to conserve and manage its SSSIs. These issues were raised at the Economy and Tourism Overview Panel on 29 April; the minutes and the decision made are on the website but I am more than happy to forward a paper copy to any resident wishing me to do so.

## ***Farm Estate***

We are working hard to secure a site/area within the farm's estate for allotments.

*I do hope that residents have found this newsletter of interest.*

**Many thanks. COUNCILLOR RON WHITTAKER**  
**[www.peoplebeforepolitics.info](http://www.peoplebeforepolitics.info)**

My two other Ward Members are:

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