

a clear vision FOR THE SOUTH EAST

UPDATE ON THE SOUTH EAST PLAN

Number 9

March 2006



Draft South East Plan submitted to Government

The Assembly's top priority since 2003 has been the preparation of a new regional plan for the South East. The **South East Plan** sets out how we can make best use of space and resources in the region so that it continues to be economically successful and an attractive place to live. The Plan will cover the period to 2026.

Further information about the South East Plan is available on the South East Plan website:
(www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan)

Assembly approves South East Plan

The draft South East Plan was approved by an overwhelming majority of Assembly members at the Winchester Plenary meeting on 1 March 2006.

The submitted Plan includes six amendments agreed at Plenary. These include the following:

The boundary of the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley (WCBV) sub-region has been redrawn to exclude the small part of South Oxfordshire District previously included within the sub-region.

The Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley Scale and Distribution of Housing Development Policy has been amended to take into account concerns about Thames Valley Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). If concerns over protecting wildlife cannot be resolved during work currently underway by the Assembly, housing allocation and distribution for this sub-region and the neighbouring London Fringe sub-region will need to be reviewed.

The definition of 'Green Infrastructure' in the Implementation Plan has been amended to the following: 'Green infrastructure includes outdoor recreational and sports facilities, parks, gardens and allotments, tracks and pathways, natural and historic sites, canals and water spaces, as well as accessible countryside. It is a network of multi-functional green spaces in urban areas, the countryside in and around towns, and the wider countryside.'

Handover to Government

The South East England Regional Assembly hands over the draft South East Plan to Government on 31 March 2006 to meet the deadline agreed with ministers last year.

The handover is the culmination of over more than two years' challenging but rewarding work by Assembly members, stakeholders and officers.

The submitted Plan consists of the following six documents:

- Executive Summary
- Core Document – regional and sub-regional policies
- Implementation Plan
- Monitoring Framework.
- Pre-submission Consultation Statement
- Sustainability Appraisal Summary

The Implementation Plan will be submitted as work in progress. Work will continue with sub-regional groups to develop more detail on infrastructure needs and costs, in time to present further information to the Examination in Public.

There is additional supporting information on the Assembly website <http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan> which includes:

- Full Sustainability Appraisal report
- Five technical notes on economic and labour demand forecasting, town centres, transport, water and demography
- Analysis of regional consultation responses.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

The draft Plan commits the Assembly to a partial review of the South East Plan in relation to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. We have liaised with the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) on the arrangements for this review, which we expect to complete in early 2008.



a clear vision FOR THE SOUTH EAST



Next Steps

Consultation on behalf of an independent panel of inspectors will take place between 31 March 2006 and 23 June 2006.

Consultation responses should be made on special response forms approved by the panel of inspectors. Copies of the form will be sent out with the consultation copies of the Plan and will also be available on the Assembly website during consultation.

Timetable

31 March 2006 – 23 June 2006	Public consultation on behalf of an independent panel of inspectors
November 2006 – March 2007	Examination in Public
Summer 2007	Report of Examination in Public panel of inspectors
End 2007	Secretary of State publishes proposed modifications following consideration of panel report
Spring 2008	Revised South East Plan published

Copies of the Plan

The Plan is available in hard copy and CD versions. It will be sent to over 5,000 consultees including local authorities, Government agencies, town and parish councils, voluntary, environmental and economic groups.

Additional copies can be downloaded free of charge from the Assembly website or purchased from the Assembly.

Printed copies (limited supply) cost £35, CD copies cost £10.

Public inspection copies will also be sent to all libraries and local authorities in the region.

Raising Awareness of Consultation

To raise awareness of the consultation a postcard will be displayed in dispensers in libraries, town halls and other public information points and will also feature in newspaper adverts.

The postcard below will also provide members of the public and stakeholders with feedback about the Plan process to date.



The South East Plan explained

Katie - pictured on the front of this postcard - is three. She's not concerned about where she will live when she's in her twenties or what sort of job she will have, so her future is in our hands.

Last year the South East England Regional Assembly asked you how we should plan for the next 20 years. We wanted Your Shout on what we should do about housing, environment, transport, the economy and other important issues affecting us all.

We've considered your views and have now submitted an updated South East Plan to Government, setting out a clear vision for the region's future. Until 23 June 2006 there is a further chance to make comments to an independent panel of inspectors.

We must plan to ensure that our region continues to prosper and offer a good quality of life. The South East Plan creates a blueprint for the region's development; it includes an action plan for delivery and sets out our need for investment in better infrastructure; but a successful future also depends on all of us changing the way we live, for example by recycling more and using public transport more often. The Plan covers:

Housing

Our target is to make provision for new housing across the region, with a strong emphasis on high design standards and energy efficiency. We will look at developing brownfield sites, making efficient use of existing housing stock and making sure there is enough affordable housing.

Environment

We will manage water resources by improving water efficiency and building new reservoirs. To safeguard the future of the region as the climate changes, we will give priority to flood management, protecting wildlife and woodlands, reducing pollution and promoting renewable energy.

Transport

We need to invest in and use public transport more, so travel is more sustainable and damages the environment less. We must tackle bottlenecks on the roads and improve cycling and pedestrian routes. There needs to be better access to international and regional gateways, and greater use of railways for freight.

Economy

Our plan is to create strong business networks and provide a good range of employment sites. Key priorities are improving workforce skills and helping poorer areas become more economically successful.

Waste and recycling

There is much to be done in the area of waste management and recycling. We aim to limit the growth in waste by encouraging recycling and composting to reduce reliance on landfill sites.

And...

Quality of life will benefit from proposals to protect our natural landscape, improve suburban areas, create vibrant town centres and support tourism. We also plan to target deprivation so that everyone benefits from the good quality of life that the South East region can offer.

If you would like further information on the South East Plan visit: www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan or phone 01483 555208.

THE SOUTH EAST PLAN