Call for Evidence: The Environment in Focus[1]

Polls consistently reveal voters want politicians to do more to protect nature/countryside. Yet, government confirms[2] NPPF 2024 will bring more harm to the environment. The Planning & Infrastructure Bill (Part III) is also environmentally regressive[3].

We would like the EAC to investigate failures to align the planning system with nature/climate goals, the harms caused to the environment by the government's policies and government rhetoric about delays within the planning system caused by environmental/ecological considerations. Such statements are not based on evidence[4][5]. Government itself has acknowledged[6] that there is very little evidence that nature blocks development.

In addition, government places no value on nature, contrary to analysis confirming natural capital in England *"delivers £37bn per year in benefits"*[7], or, higher, £1.8trillion in 2022[8]. Housing targets seem unevidenced and are far higher than population growth projections warrant[9].

Our own report[10] sets out how we could meet housing need without impacting the environment or nature (or blowing our carbon budget).

Kind regards

Marj Powner

Vice Chair, Community Planning Alliance

07801917375

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[1] https://committees.parliament.uk/work/9336/the-environment-in-focus/
[2] MHCLG FOI EIR2024/24949
[3] https://cieem.net/updated-legal-opinion-on-planning-and-infrastructure-bill-says-it-is-still-regressive/

[4] https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/may/22/wildlife-charities-urge-labour-to-scrap-licence-to-kill-nature-in-planning-bill ("*The data from analysis of 17,433 planning appeals in England in 2024 found that newts were relevant in just 140 (0.8%) planning appeals and bats in 432 (2.48%)").*

[5] https://farming.co.uk/news/uk-government-admits-almost-no-evidence-nature-protections-block-development (A Natural England information request carried out in 2022 *"found that in the year April 2021 to March 2022 out of 32,056 land use consultations, just 15 were objected to on Habitats Regulations grounds (0.045%)").*

[6] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6819d05a78d8cdc68ff03b7e/Annex_10_-_Nature_Restoration_Fund.pdf
[7] https://consult.defra.gov.uk/land-use-framework/land-use-consultation/supporting_documents/LU_analytical%20annex.pdf
[8] https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/uknaturalcapitalaccounts/2022
[9] https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/more-homes-than-households-who-we-building-rosie-pearson-3nh2e/?trackingId=sjc76mlGQh6iXKiTaODKVA%3D%3D (The latest ONS projections suggest a need of only 120,000 new homes a year)
[10] https://homesforeveryone.org/Homes-For-Everyone-Report.pdf

About the Community Planning Alliance

The Community Planning Alliance is a national umbrella group for over 700 communities, all are campaigning against inappropriate development in their areas, and all disagree that decisions are being made in the 'public interest'. We have extensive knowledge and experience of the planning system, and our aims include seeking increased community participation, better environmental protections and the right homes and infrastructure in the right places.