



Campaign to Protect
Rural England

Campaigning for the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of the countryside

www.cpre.org.uk

How can we manage motor traffic in rural areas?



Ralph Smyth, CPRE
*Reclaiming Our Rural
Roads*

July 2010, Hexham



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Overview

- Traffic trauma
- Where are we in 2010?
- Cutting carbon, the new driver for change?
- People
- Roads
- Modes
- Conclusions





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About CPRE

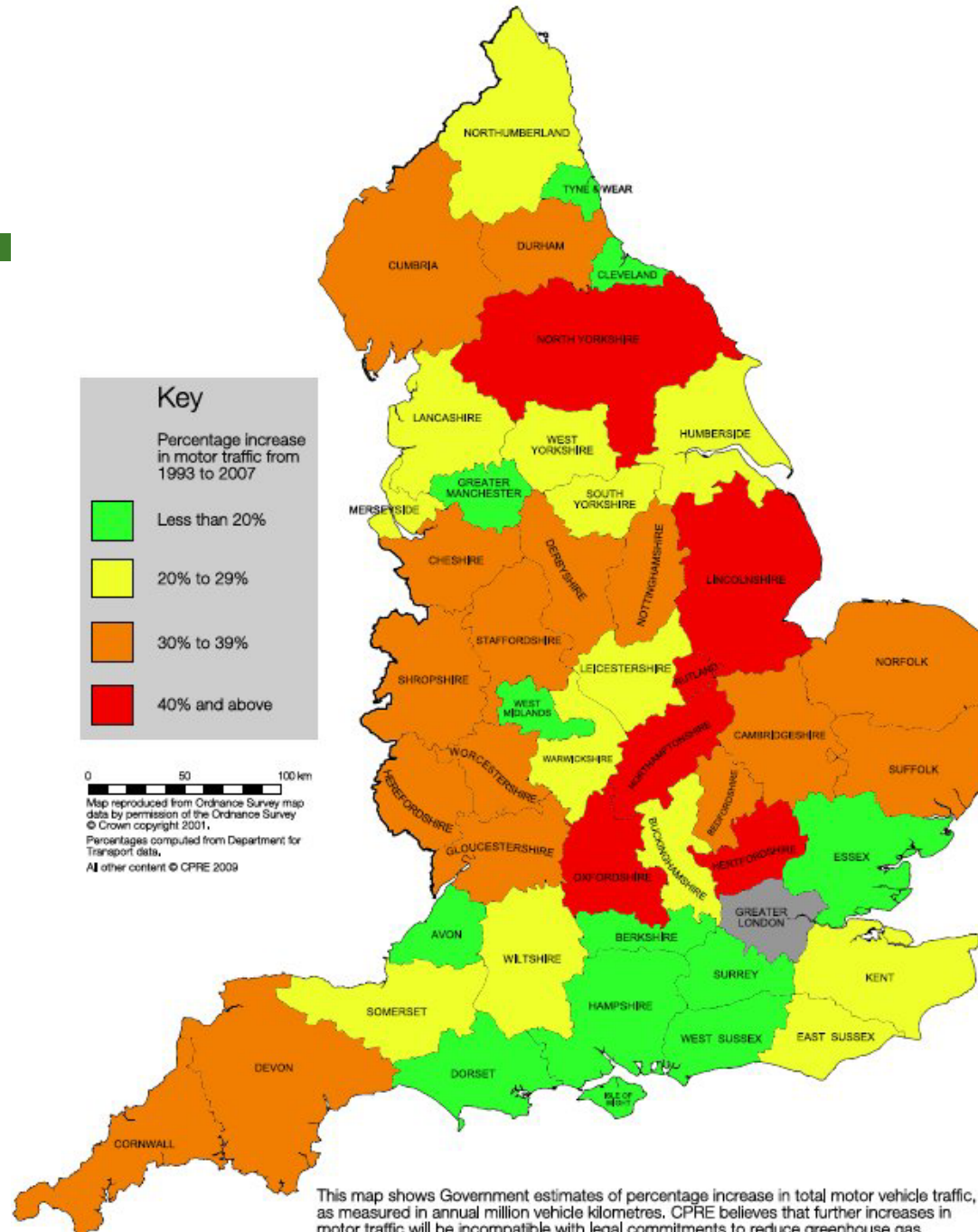
- Established in 1926
- President: Bill Bryson, Patron: HM The Queen
- Aim of sustainable use of land in town and country
- Focus is on rural and planning issues
- Structure: National Office, regions, independent county branches & district groups
- 60,000 supporters, plus nearly half all parish councils & 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” and “more walking & cycling”



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Chart showing percentage increase in motor traffic on local authority roads 1993-2007



This map shows Government estimates of percentage increase in total motor vehicle traffic, as measured in annual million vehicle kilometres. CPRE believes that further increases in motor traffic will be incompatible with legal commitments to reduce greenhouse gas.

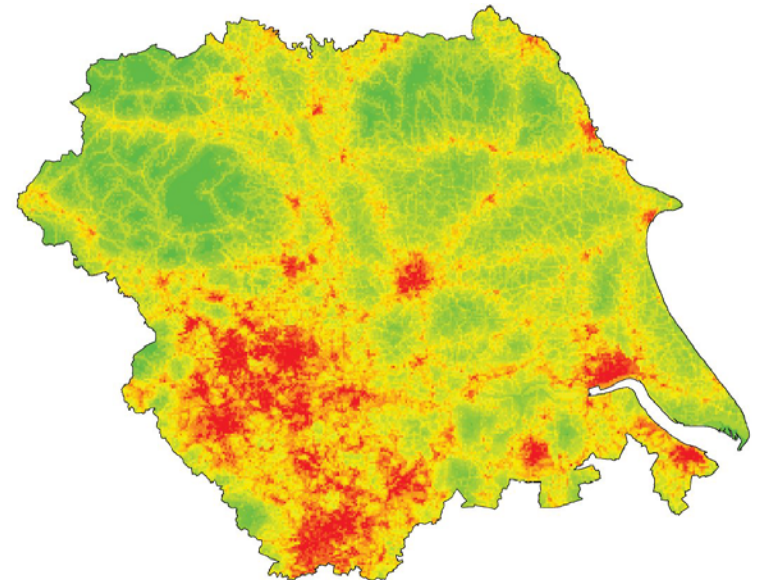


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Traffic trauma

- TAIM research (Eco-logica, 2000, for Countryside Agency) suggests traffic thresholds vary with context
- Tranquillity can be best described as ‘getting away from it all’, i.e. the sounds & sights of humankind

Impact of roads clearly visible on Yorks & Humber tranquillity map: road noise biggest public concern





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Fatalism

There Is No Alternative

...and even if there was there's no longer any money to pay for it

No policy, no pounds, no planning?

Rural areas have been at the back of the queue for smart cards, electric cars, smarter choices, etc.





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Looking ahead

- Coalition agreement
- Drastically reduced spending
- Treasury's nine questions for Comprehensive Spending Review
- Localism & Big Society
- Abolishing targets, regional tier & quangos
- Natural Environment White Paper
- Reform of transport appraisal





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Carbon

- Not the only game in town (or country) but binding carbon budgets are key
- Traffic levels suggested as metric by Committee on Climate Change (CCC)
- No increase in car traffic
- CCC calls for roll out of Smarter Choices (in particular for rural & longer distance), better land use planning, more technology & better travel options
- Locking in any reductions in demand is vital





People

- Need packages: better sustainable travel options as well as better promotion
- Land use planning is key but longer term
- Business analogy of ‘comparative advantage’: consider implications for relative advantages between modes of all policy and investment decisions
- E.g. travel time, cost, reliability, social status, convenience, safety, health



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Smarter Choices

Effects of Smarter Choices in Sustainable Travel Demonstration Towns report (DfT, Feb 2010) is essential reading

- Hard and soft measures work best together
- Destination shift and trip evaporation seen as well as modal shift. In other words shorter trips (making walking possible) or even not travelling at all.
- E.g. promotion of local shops and services in Sustainable Travel Towns

Promotion

- National level: Change4life, Act on CO2, TransportDirect, OpenCycleMap
- Trip generator targeting: Workplace, School, Housing & Leisure Travel Plans
- Local area campaigns: STTs, 'Give the Driver a Break', Highway Agency
- Individual level: Personal Travel Planning



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Land use planning

- Planning is more than just ensuring new developments have cycle racks and electric charging points
- Really do need to 'reduce the need to travel' now
- Recession is a huge threat
- It's not a 'bus stop mentality'
- But draft PPS1 replaces 'secure the fullest possible use of sustainable transport' with 'secure opportunities for'. This would be a massive step backwards.





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Roads

Move from targeting
locations, to routes
and now to areas

- Rural filtered permeability
- Speed limits
- Enforcement





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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.





Speed limits

- Road Safety Strategy & Speed Limit Circular delayed
- 2011 deadline for review of A & B roads unlikely to be met as funding is cut
- Speed limit lottery is confusing and repeater signs are unaffordable & ugly
- Move to 20mph as default in built up areas
- 50mph as default with 40mph zones on minor roads without centre lines?





Enforcement

Speed limits and restrictions often ignored

- DfT Traffic Signs Policy Review could reduce sign clutter and confusion
- Decriminalisation provides new funding stream for local authorities
- Community Speed Watch should be rolled out to lower speed limits, in particular 20mph
- Fixed Penalty Notice for Careless & Inconsiderate Driving needed



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Modes

Integration is often poor

- Timetabling: pulse and clockface
- Ticketing: city/rural
- Mapping: locally inconsistent
- Integration: Station Travel Plans etc
- Car clubs and car sharing: owning a car should not be the only option





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Physically active travel

- Tackle fear of traffic and poor safety record, e.g. cycling three times more dangerous on rural roads
- First priority is safe routes within 5km of settlements, stations and key destinations
- Reduce or at least manage motor speeds and flows
- Where these are too high still, build separate shared use ways along busier roads
- Integrate planning for road network with separate motor traffic-free network, e.g. RoWs, Greenways
- Offer new opportunities, e.g. trying out electric cycles, trailers etc.





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Rural public transport

- Changes or end to Bus Subsidy Operators' Grant likely: huge impact
- Major changes already to services
- Will concessionary fares be seen as an urban subsidy?
- Kickstart needed for Local Transport Act 2008 new opportunities
- Link & Ride as alternative to Park & Ride





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Rural rail

- Focus on what rail does best or try new ideas?
- Funding very tight but new partnerships possible
- Modular stations cheaper
- Rail regulation review offers opportunities for Ultra Light Rail, as well as more passenger use of heritage and freight lines





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Freight

- Light Goods Vehicle traffic rising fastest
- Lorry Road User Charging may offer solutions for HGV management
- Depending on technology used, it could be combined with access restrictions
- Demand Responsive Freight Transport and community hubs could help consolidate trips for smaller loads in rural areas





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Conclusions

- TINA or already passed 'peak car'?
- Integrated approach essential
- CPRE creating DIY Transport Toolkit
- Leap of faith needed

