

Dear Editor,

The Planning Reform Bill proposed by Robert Jenrick , Secretary of State for Housing, has alarmed national conservation organisations such as CPRE as it would allow the building of 300,000 houses per annum while removing control from Local Authorities and residents. We, a local Green Belt Society totally support their opposition.

Green Belt is essential for human health and wellbeing. The increasing invasion of Green Belt land also removes the habitat for wildlife and will add to the rapid decline of endangered birds, animals and insects. Hedgehogs, red squirrels, tortoiseshell butterflies, dormice are all disappearing from our countryside killed off by modern farming and gardening, traffic, air pollution and the relentless destruction of their habitat.

We strongly believe that housing should be concentrated on brownfield and recycled sites. Greenfield should be used only after careful consideration and should carry a heavy levy on the developer. Well designed ecologically friendly blocks of flats would save green space. Empty and second houses should be taxed.

It is vitally necessary to preserve the green environment by conserving woodlands, planting trees, and reducing use of fossil fuels and plastic. Careful stewardship of what remains of our beautiful countryside means sharing the planet with all other species before our own is also endangered.

Ann Goddard.

Chair Elstree and Borehamwood Green Belt Society.