

EMBARGOED: Thursday November 22nd @ 00.1hrs

THAMES GATEWAY REPORT SHOWS BIG GAPS IN REAL PROGRESS

One year after they were first published by CPRE[1] in 2006, half of the local authority areas in the Thames Gateway show either regression or no progress at all in respect of 5 out of 10 key indicators.

This is the overall conclusion drawn from the second year report of *Focus on the Thames Gateway*, which is published today [2]. The report shows that most Thames Gateway boroughs show improving trends in respect of:

- using brownfield land for housing and business premises
- making efficient use of land for housing
- protecting environmentally designated sites
- promoting good design

But at least half of the boroughs show no progress – or regression – in respect of:

- unemployment rates
- educational attainment
- access to local amenities and services
- town centre renewal
- greenspace management

The record in respect of greenspace management is particularly poor.

The Appendix, below, presents the overall trend for each of the 10 parameters measured.

Hilary Newport for CPRE said:

‘The Government has published a huge amount of hype about its ambitions for the Thames Gateway, but what really counts is what changes in the daily lives of ordinary people. We welcome progress in some important areas, but no amount of new strategies or fine words can cover up important failures elsewhere.’

‘All of the five failing trends that we have identified will be of concern to the Government, but the particularly poor record in greenspace management will present a poignant challenge to the much vaunted Thames Gateway Parklands project, which is supposed to bring well managed, accessible greenspace within easy reach of all Thames Gateway residents.’

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