

# a clear vision FOR THE SOUTH EAST

## UPDATE ON THE SOUTH EAST PLAN

Number Two

April 2004



## The Spring Debates: April – May 2004

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The Assembly's top priority is currently the preparation of an important new document called the **South East Plan**. The South East Plan will set out how we can make best use of space and resources in the South East to ensure the region continues to be economically successful and an attractive place to live. It will cover the period to 2026.

This is the second in a series of updates which the Assembly will use to keep you informed about our progress and consultation opportunities.

### Progress on the Plan

Since the last update in February, Assembly officers and members have been finalising the details for the Spring Debates workshop programme.

- Dates and venues have been confirmed, and invitations sent out, for the 17 workshops which will be held between 15 April and 21 May in various locations around the South East.
- The eleven discussion papers which will be used to shape the debates at the Spring Debates have been written and are being distributed to invited attendees
- A special workshop for members of the Regional Planning Committee and Executive Committee was held on 15 March during which members were able to give their input into the discussion papers.

A special meeting of the Assembly was held on 7 April in London. The meeting was an opportunity for all members to give early input into the South East Plan before the wider Spring Debates. Members were also able to hear from MORI about the findings of the first stage of opinion surveys for the South East Plan.

### South East Plan Website

To coincide with the beginning of the Spring Debates on 15 April, the Assembly is launching a dedicated South East Plan website ([www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan)).

The site includes up to date information about the South East Plan and progress in its preparation. This includes:

- Final report from the first stage of opinion surveys for the Plan;
- Timetable for the Spring Debates;
- Copies of all the discussion papers used at the Spring Debates.

### Opinion Survey Findings

The first stage of opinion surveys for the South East Plan was completed at the end of March.

MORI interviewed over 1,800 residents from across the South East about their perceptions of their local area and the South East as a whole, as well as asking them about specific issues such as housing, transport, employment and other services.

Key findings of the research include:

- Overall, a high proportion of residents are satisfied with their quality of life in the region.
- However, top priorities are providing more affordable housing and improving transport, especially public transport.
- On housing, the top priority is the need to make housing more affordable. More family homes are most people's priority, and over 70% of those polled want homes to be detached, semi-detached, 2-3 storey terraces or town houses. However, people are concerned that infrastructure to support housing growth is insufficient in the region.

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- On transport, improvements to bus and rail services are key priorities, as is reducing traffic congestion. There are concerns that congestion will get worse with increases in housing development. Despite this, 65% of those polled oppose the introduction of a congestion charge.

The final research report is available on the South East Plan website ([www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan)). The next two stages of the opinion research will take place in April-May 2004 and early 2005 respectively.

## Spring Debates Workshop Programme

The workshop programme for the Spring Debates begins on 15 April in Reading. There are 17 workshops in total which cover specific county, sub-regional areas or sector group:

- 15 April – Berkshire (Reading)
- 16 April – West Sussex (Crawley)
- 19 April – East Sussex (Eastbourne)
- 22 April – Oxfordshire (Oxford)
- 26 April – Voluntary sector (Maidstone)
- 27 April – Hampshire (Basingstoke)
- 30 April – Surrey (Guildford)
- 5 May – Inter-regional issues (London)
- 6 May – Kent (Maidstone)
- 7 May – Regional Government Agencies (Guildford)
- 7 May – Eastern Dorset, South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (Portsmouth)
- 11 May – Milton Keynes/Aylesbury Vale and Central Oxfordshire (Milton Keynes)
- 12 May – East Kent and Ashford, Kent Thames Gateway (Canterbury)
- 14 May – London to Brighton and Sussex Coastal towns (Hove)
- 17 May – Western Corridor, Blackwater Valley and London Fringe (Slough)
- 18 May – Buckinghamshire (Wycombe)
- 21 May – Western Corridor, Blackwater Valley and London Fringe (Slough)

The workshops will cover a wide range of issues that need to be considered in the South East Plan. The basis for the discussions will be a series of 11 discussion papers.

The workshops are by invitation only and these invitations were sent out in March. If you have any questions about the workshops and the invitations please call the Assembly Secretariat on 01483 555200 or email [secretariat@southeast-ra.gov.uk](mailto:secretariat@southeast-ra.gov.uk).

## Spring Debates Discussion Papers

There are 11 papers covering the range of issues which need to be considered in the South East Plan preparation process:

- Paper 1 – Context
- Paper 2 – Appraisal, Assessment and Proofing
- Paper 3 – Futures and Patterns of Change
- Paper 4 – Projections and Forecasts
- Paper 5 – Economy and Employment
- Paper 6 – Housing
- Paper 7 – Transport
- Paper 8 – Social Issues
- Paper 9 – Natural Resources
- Paper 10 – Sub-regions
- Paper 11 – Strategic Issues

Paper 11 gives an overview of the strategic issues for the Spring Debates, suggests a vision for the South East Plan, outlines the spatial discussions and suggests the focus for the next stages of research and study.

The discussion papers are available on the South East Plan website ([www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan)) along with instructions on how to hold your own debate.

## How to become involved

- Up to date information about the South East Plan is available on the South East Plan website ([www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan))
- Further details about the Spring Debates programme are available on the website.
- Copies of the discussion papers will also be made available to groups wishing to hold their own debates.
- Additional copies of this update are available from the Assembly secretariat or can be downloaded from the South East Plan website.
- For general enquiries, please contact the Assembly on 01483 555200 or email [secretariat@southeast-ra.gov.uk](mailto:secretariat@southeast-ra.gov.uk).
- For media enquiries, please contact Lesley van Dijk at the Regional Assembly on 01483 555223 or email [lesleyvandijk@southeast-ra.gov.uk](mailto:lesleyvandijk@southeast-ra.gov.uk).
- **All discussion papers for the Spring Debates are on the South East Plan website. Please study them and send us your comments by 28 May 2004.**