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YEARS



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
Sussex

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: CPRE Sussex joins national call on aviation appeal rights

Letter to prime minister Andy Burnham warns proposed airspace reforms could leave residents without meaningful independent scrutiny.

CPRE Sussex has joined 22 national community and environmental organisations in signing an open letter to prime minister Andy Burnham over aviation appeal rights.

The letter, hand-delivered to 10 Downing Street today (September 1) warns proposed aviation reforms could remove residents' access to a fair, independent review of airspace change decisions.

Campaigners say the Civil Aviation Bill would give the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) extensive new rule-making powers while weakening the ability of communities to challenge decisions that affect homes, schools, health, wellbeing and daily life.

CPRE Sussex trustee and co-founder of CAGNE Sally Pavey said: "This Bill risks giving communities the worst of both worlds: more decisions made over their heads, with no independent way to review them. Residents deserve a process that is transparent, accountable and genuinely fair. If there can be independent oversight for passengers, consumers – and proposed for the Clean Water Bill – then there must also be independent oversight for the communities living under flight paths."

Campaigners are calling on the prime minister and parliament to support an amendment establishing an independent aviation ombudsman to oversee the airspace change process and provide residents with a transparent, credible and accessible right of appeal outside the CAA.

The groups stress that their campaign is not anti-aviation. They recognise the need for a safe, efficient and modern aviation system, but say reform must not place industry convenience ahead of public accountability.

CPRE Sussex campaigns and communications manager Nancy Duckels said: "CPRE Sussex is proud to stand alongside CAGNE in calling for an independent aviation ombudsman. It is just common sense that the public should be able to appeal decisions made that will affect their homes and welfare. In Sussex, we are already expected to tolerate the expansion of Gatwick airport, which will bring huge damage to our countryside and communities. If the CAA Bill goes through unchecked, Sussex residents will have no right of appeal over flight path changes that would bring even more pollution."

The Civil Aviation Bill is expected to proceed through further parliamentary stages following its passage through the House of Lords.

Campaigners hope MPs from across the political spectrum will support an amendment creating an independent aviation ombudsman.

-ENDS-

Notes for editors:

For press inquiries and interview opportunities call Nancy Duckels on 07795 551852.

Attached image outside No 10 Downing Street, London.

The letter was delivered to No 10 Downing Street on Tuesday, September 1. It was signed by 22 national community and environmental groups alongside local signatories.

About CPRE Sussex

CPRE Sussex is shaping a greener future for Sussex. Our priorities are:

- Beautiful landscapes, rich in nature and greener towns and cities
- Countryside and green spaces which are accessible to all, enriching lives and health
- Sustainable development for thriving communities
- Effective responses to the climate emergency

We engage with decision makers, influencing them and challenging them to protect the Sussex countryside and green spaces. We inform on environmental issues and empower individuals and communities with robust evidence to defend and enhance the green spaces they love. We believe in collaborating with others to ensure a greener future for our county. We research and provide advice on planning issues. Together we can shape a greener future for Sussex.