

**Oxford - Milton Keynes - Bedford - Cambridge Corridor  
Developments  
CPRE Bedfordshire's Briefing Document No.3**

## **George Monbiot Slams NIC Oxford Cambridge corridor proposals**

The following Briefing Document is aimed at CPRE Bedfordshire's members, Town & Parish Councils, District Councillors and others in Bedfordshire who have asked for our views on the impact of the National Infrastructure Commission's (NIC) Plans for the Oxford - Cambridge Corridor.

- **+1 Million new homes and a population increase of +1.9 million people**
- **Distance from Oxford to Cambridge less than 100 miles**
- **+1 million homes: equivalent to 20 cities the size of Cambridge**
- **+1.9 million people: equivalent to 2 cities the size of Birmingham**

CPRE's view is that it makes no sense to encourage this extreme level of development and population growth in an area where house prices are already high for local people, which suffers from severe road and rail congestion, high population density, extremely serious water supply issues and very high levels of air pollution.

A better solution would be a National Industrial and Housing Strategy which seeks to ensure that development is more equitably spread across the UK.

**Now George Monbiot, leading political commentator, Guardian columnist and author, uses the same arguments as CPRE Bedfordshire to strongly criticise NIC plans for development across the Oxford - Cambridge Corridor.**

## Local Democracy in Crisis - No Debate Allowed!

[Read George Monbiot's complete article](#) from the Guardian at this link.

(The letter from Housing Minister Kit Malthouse to Local Authorities referred to in George Monbiot's article is attached)

The key points of George Monbiot's article are:

### 1. Devastating development on an unprecedented scale

*"This disastrous new project will change the face of Britain..."*

*"The new road, says the plan will support the construction of a million homes ... consider that Oxfordshire will have to provide 300,000 of them. It currently contains 280,000 homes."*

*"In 30 years, if this scheme goes ahead, [Oxfordshire] must build as many new houses, and the infrastructure, public services and businesses required to support them, as have been built in the past 1,000 ..."*

*CPRE Bedfordshire comment: Bedfordshire will face a similar scale of development.*

### 2. Huge environmental and social impact not considered

*"The National Infrastructure Commission, which also advises government, ignores some issues altogether, such as how water for another million homes will be provided in a region where demand already exceeds supply."*

### 3. Democracy in crisis - no debate allowed

*"Decisions about the Oxford-Cambridge expressway and the vast conurbation it will create are made behind closed doors."*

*"Where democracy counts most, it is nowhere to be seen. The decisions that shape the life of a nation are taken behind our backs"*

*"The consequences of such decisions will be greater than almost any others that are made."*

**The people of Bedfordshire have never been consulted about this huge conurbation stretching from Oxford through Bedfordshire to Cambridge.**

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