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**For Immediate Release**

## **Closer to being quieter**

Local action group's proposal to reduce noise from stretches of the M40 moves a step closer following its meeting with Department of Transport (DfT).

Chaired by Wycombe District Council, the local action group M40 Chilterns Environment Group (M40CEG) and representatives from the DfT met to discuss the group's submission under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 (SCA).

Of what is intended to be the first of a series of discussions, the group outlined its submission at the meeting and sought DfT's feedback in order to further improve the chances of the submission.

Separate from the SCA the DfT confirmed that they had adopted a Noise Action Plan but were still developing the guidance for the feasibility and affordability assessments. The DfT welcomed the group's input which can be feed into the process.

Ken Edwards, chairman of M40CEG, commented: 'We welcome the positive continuation of our submission and DfT's involvement in the process. It is with high hopes that a further meeting can be arranged shortly to include all key players, particularly Defra and the LGA. The group's activity is driven by the long standing desire of local people to improve our quality of life - the outcome will test election promises to increase people power.'

The M40CEG group now await DfT's initial observations and comments on the group's 6-step programme to reduce noise along key stretches of the M40. Further meetings are to be scheduled with both Defra and the LGA to continue the positive momentum that has been started by all parties involved in the Sustainable Communities Act.

All parties were in agreement that the meeting had offered a very good opportunity for a very useful exchange of information and comment.

**Notes for editors**

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007 [AMENDMENT] BILL 2009-10

Following agreement by both Houses on the text of the Bill it received Royal Assent on 8 April. The Bill is now an Act of Parliament (law).

Summary of the Bill

The Bill seeks to amend the 2007 Act by setting a deadline for the Secretary of State to initiate the next round of proposals from local authorities for enhancing the sustainability of local communities.

It provides for regulations to be made specifying the rules for this process. These regulations will also cover parish council involvement and the role of local petitioning. There is also provision for greater flexibility in decision-making on proposals.

**For further information please contact Ben Jackson, Communications Officer, on 01494 421 207.**