



In the Know

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This is the fifth edition of our new quarterly electronic newsletter. Its purpose is simple, to keep you in the know about what is going on in the Government Office for the West Midlands and our sponsor Departments in Whitehall. We hope that you find it both informative and clear.

communications.team@gowm.gsi.gov.uk

Compact Commissioner praises GOWM contribution

GOWM has been awarded a gold commendation by the Commissioner for the Compact for its work in supporting the 14 Upper Tier Local Authorities in the region to assess their current position in working to Compact Codes of Practice.

The Citation awarded to GOWM reads: "Government Office West Midlands - awarded a Gold Compact Commendation for Excellence in the monitoring and evaluation category. Two research projects supporting the self assessment of 14 Local Compacts across the region, using interviews and focus groups facilitated and supported by Government Office Localities Teams together with a Neighbourhood Renewal Advisor. Also, for developing discussions with the sector around Local Area Agreements and how to the engage the sector in contributing to the debate on developing new ones in 2008."

The Compact was established in England in November 1998 and was inspired by the Deakin Commission report on the Future of the Voluntary Sector. It is an agreement that provides an overall framework for promoting effective partnership working between the Government and the voluntary and community sector. It aims to address areas of poor performance and sets out a statement of intent to work in partnership supported by five codes of practice. These five codes cover funding and procurement, community groups, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, volunteers and consultation.

Local Compacts, informed by the National Compact and its five codes of practice, are local agreements for partnership working and 99 per cent of local authority areas have, or are developing, a Local Compact.

Other Regional winners were:

Wolverhampton- a Gold Compact Commendation for Excellence in the Compact way of working category. This relates to its work to embed the Compact in its Local Strategic Partnership and other partnerships, including the development of a partnership toolkit for the Children and Young People's Service, joint commissioning of Compact work, and capacity building for groups receiving Council funding.

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Compact Commissioner praises GOWM contribution continued

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Elias is a dedicated supporter of the Compact, undertaking many activities and supporting voluntary and community sector funding and capacity building.

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Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust and the Warwickshire Primary Care Trust - awarded a Compact Commendation for Excellence in voice and independence. For implementing an exemplary Compact compliant consultation over the future of adult mental health services, with a 14 week consultation period, public and stakeholder meetings and a clear document setting out the issues. This has set a new benchmark in the County.

Councillor Elias Mattu, Wolverhampton Compact Champion and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety at Wolverhampton County Council, awarded a Compact Commendation for Excellence award. Elias is a dedicated supporter of the Compact, undertaking many activities and supporting voluntary and community sector funding and capacity building.

A draft Regional Compact Review Report, incorporating local feedback was launched by Third Sector Minister Phil Hope MP at a regional event in Wolverhampton on 4 December. The report is currently out for consultation until 29 February 2008.

The link below takes you to the document for you to view and find out where to send your comments.

- [West Midlands Compact Review – draft report](#)
- [Read more about the Compact.](#)





Local Area Agreements - The First Cut

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To meet the very challenging deadlines set by Ministers to ensure sign off in June 2008, GOWM has a robust delivery plan.”

We held a very successful Local Area Agreement Roadshow on 19th November at the Molineux Football Ground in Wolverhampton. It was attended by close to 170 regional partners hearing first hand from CLG, the Audit Commission and other Inspectorates as we move into the delivery phase of the LAAs.

The Publication of the National Indicator set and the Operational Guidance, together with Royal assent to the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act sets a firm framework for the negotiation and agreement of the LAAs.

To meet the very challenging deadlines set by Ministers to ensure sign off in June 2008, GOWM has a robust delivery plan: key dates being:

Date	Action
September	
03.09.07	GOWM Meeting with Regional Partners (not duty to co operate) - includes RIEP, RAWM
12.09.07	GOWM Meeting with Audit Commission: Locality Managers and Relationship Managers
w/c 17.09.07	LAA Phase 1 guidance issued - from feasibility testing; Indicator set to Ministers for decision
21.09.07	“Developing your new LAA” event at Guildhall, Coventry
W/c 24.09.07	CSCI workshop
28.09.07	GOWM meeting with agencies included in ‘Duty to co-operate’

October	
17.10.07	Regional Board Meeting- LAA Presentation
w/c 22.10.07	State of Region data available; 200 indicators published; CSR outcome determined; A.C. reports available; Further data sets available from DCLG;

November	
08.11.07	Consultation paper on technical definitions for indicators published (to 21 December)
19.11.07	CLG Regional Roadshow- WOLVERHAMPTON
20.11.07	Phase 2 guidance and Statutory Guidance issued
30.11.07	Draft 1 completed and submitted by LSPs to GOWM

December	
3.12.07	Revised IMD published
3.12.07	Locality Teams complete review of Draft 1
17.12.07	Draft 1 returned with written comments to LSPs

January 2008	
25.1.08	FORMAL SUBMISSION OF DRAFT LAA TO CLG

February	
	Negotiations continue

March	
28.03.08	Final draft submitted to GOWM

April / May	
	Negotiation of Targets continues and concludes

June	
2.06.08	MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE AND SIGN PROCESS BEGINS





Local Area Agreements - The First Cut continued

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Ministers are naturally taking a very keen interest in how this is proceeding and the Government Office Network are required to report regularly to Whitehall on the negotiating process.

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Discussions are currently taking place with localities about the “Story of Place” that sets the context for priority setting. Regionally, those are robust and have good evidence that articulates the priorities being worked through for each locality. Ministers are naturally taking a very keen interest in how this is proceeding and the Government Office Network are required to report regularly to Whitehall on the negotiating process.

Our next key date is the end of January when we are expected to formally submit priorities (and indicators if a locality is at a stage where they can expressed) to CLG and through them to Whitehall. We are constantly stressing to all our Partners, internal and external that this is an iterative process and will take time to conclude.





New Deputy Regional Director for Children and Learners

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The Every Child Matters agenda is huge and ever growing and an important part of the new Local Area Agreements.

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Clive Wilkinson is the new Deputy Regional Director for Children and Learners having officially taken up his new role on 1st December 2007. He continues to carry out the functions of Children's Services Adviser in the Region working with LAs on developing the Every Child Matters Agenda, a recruitment exercise to appoint his successor is underway.

Clive is a former Assistant Director of Children's Services and has a wide background in education having being a headteacher, college lecturer and LA chief inspector of schools, during which period he was also national president of the Society of Chief Inspectors and Advisers. He works closely with DCSF on developing national policy locally and is the main contact from the Government Office on the Every Child Matters agenda and particularly the education strand.

Clive is married to a headteacher but to get away from 'work related matters' he enjoys phonography, walking and calligraphy. The latter has been a lifetime interest, although in recent years there has not been much time to spend at the drawing board. He used this skill in the education world and did a lot of work nationally on the development of children's handwriting which culminated a decade ago in writing and co-presenting 'Dance of the Pen' with Humphrey Lyttelton on BBC2. During filming he actually played Mornington Crescent with the master.

Leading the Children and Learners Directorate is an exciting prospect with much work to do in improving the lives of children and young people.

The directorate's priorities include, working with LAs on progressing the next stages of the Every Child Matters Agenda including developing multi disciplinary/agency teams focussed on early intervention and prevention; helping in the development of more children's centres and monitoring and supporting the development of communication, language and literacy skills of the youngest children, developing integrated youth support services along with the complex issues around 14-19 diplomas; developing strategies to improve the health and well-being of all young people including reducing childhood obesity and ensuring that social and emotional education are part of every child's time at school. The directorate has a large role to play in helping LAs develop the Safeguarding agenda, not least with working with Local Safeguarding Children's boards (LSCB) and in helping improve the lives of all children in care.

The Every Child Matters agenda is huge and ever growing and an important part of the new Local Area Agreements. A challenge, but one the C & L Directorate is keen to take on in helping Children and Young People on a pathway to success.





The Final Push

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Over the coming months the team will be facilitating a number of events across the region to brief partners about what the Hallmarks mean for them.

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Like all current Public Service Agreements (PSA), the Home Office PSA 1, to reduce crime by 15% across the region and more in high crime areas, runs until March 2008. Performance against the PSA is tracked at a regional and local level through the recorded crime British Crime Survey comparator. The provisional and unpublished data received from forces in England and Wales indicates that crime is continuing to fall across England and Wales. This represents an outstanding effort and will have made a real difference to people in all your communities.

The efforts of partners and practitioners around the country have had a genuine effect on crime reduction and across the West Midlands Region there have been some exceptional performances from Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. However, successful achievement of the PSA will depend on the continued focused effort from partnerships.

GOWM and the Home Office are encouraging partners to make a “Final Push” to achieve PSA1. Partnerships are encouraged to look again to see if there are any areas where they can make a real crime reduction impact, not only in attainment of the current target, but more importantly for the long term benefit of communities. To support partners the Home Office is holding a number of on-line chat sessions to offer advice on how practitioners can have a sustained impact. Details of these and some excellent resources are available at the Crime Reduction website. www.crimereduction@homeoffice.gov.uk

In the West Midlands the GOWM Community Safety Directorate and Places Directorate are working to support Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships drive performance by focusing on the Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships. The hallmarks are:

- Empowered and effective leadership
- Intelligence led business processes
- Effective and Responsive delivery structures
- Engaged Communities
- Visible and Constructive Accountability
- Appropriate Knowledge and Skills

Over the coming months the team will be facilitating a number of events across the region to brief partners about what the Hallmarks mean for them.

For further information regarding the Final Push or regional events please contact the GOWM Crime Team on 0121 352 5108.





Can you help find the next Chair of Advantage West Midlands (AWM)?

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GOWM is playing a significant role in co-ordinating AWM's Chair process in the region; a key activity in the early stages is raising awareness.

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The Chair of AWM, Nick Paul, completes his second term as Chair in December 2008 and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) has begun the process to find his successor.

Nick Paul is one of four Regional Development Agency (RDA) Chairs whose second term appointment ends in December 2008. (Third term appointments are possible but have to be achieved through the open competition process.) The process for appointing RDA Chairs and other RDA Board members are different; consequently the 2008 RDA Chairs recruitment exercise will be run as a separate programme to that for other RDA Board vacancies arising in the year.

BERR has appointed the consultants Odgers, Ray and Bernsdston to assist in the search and administration process, for filling these Prime Ministerial approved high profile positions.

GOWM is playing a significant role in co-ordinating AWM's Chair process in the region; a key activity in the early stages is raising awareness. In recent weeks we have for example been contacting our regional stakeholders to inform them of the recruitment exercise, sought their comments on behalf of BERR on the draft Chair's person specification, and asked for contact details of potential candidates that the consultants might approach. The advertisement for the 2008 RDA Chair's position will

appear in the Sunday Times on 6 January 2008, the deadline for applications will be the 30 January 2008. The positions will be advertised as requiring a time commitment of up to three days per week with a 3 day remuneration of £78,931, and £52,620 for 2 days.

If you should know of anyone from the business community who could be a potential candidate for AWM's Chair (it might even be you!) we would encourage you to make them aware of the recruitment process. If you prefer, you can send the names and contact details of possible candidates that the consultants might approach to sue.hatton@gowm.gsi.gov.uk

Although changes to the RDA role have been signalled in the Sub National Review (some of which require legislative changes), the RDAs remain business led organisations and the new Chairs must be from the business sector.

In the coming months GOWM's Economy team will be supporting BERR's sift and interview panels for the Chair position.

Continue →

The Panel will be chaired by Mark Gibson, Director General





Next Chair of Advantage West Midlands (AWM) continued

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(BERR), other panel members will be our Regional Director Trudi Elliott, a senior representative from CLG (name to be confirmed) and an Independent Assessor. The latter is a requirement of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies (the OPCA code), under which all RDA Board appointments are made.

Decisions on all four RDA Chairs are expected to be announced before the 2008 summer recess.





The region's response to climate change

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The inaugural meeting of the Climate Change Virtual Office will be in January, to discuss the ways in which the actions will be implemented.

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Over the last few months GOWM has been working with regional partners to develop the Regional Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). This plan, which is supported by more than 30 regional partners, outlines the steps that will be taken across the West Midlands in response to climate change over the next three years.

A governance structure has been developed which will take the form of a regional 'Climate Change Office.' This will be a virtual structure, supported by members of staff from each of the partner organisations including; the Regional Assembly, AWM, GOWM, Natural England and the Environment Agency. The structure consists of a 'Climate Change Virtual Office,' overseen and directed by a 'Climate Change Panel.' The panel is made up of the Regional Directors (or equivalent) of each of the five partners, and is chaired by Trudi Elliott.

The Climate Change Action Plan was endorsed by our Regional Minister, Liam Byrne, on 10th December at the launch of the Regional Economic Strategy. The delivery of the Regional Climate Change Action Plan as a whole is ultimately accountable to the Regional Minister.

The inaugural meeting of the Climate Change Virtual Office will be in January, to discuss the ways in which the actions will be implemented. Delivery of the actions proposed in the CCAP may be challenging, however, climate change has never been such a

critical issue, and the new Climate Change Office will ensure that the efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change are delivered in partnership across the region.

- The West Midlands Climate Action Plan is available on-line on the Government Office for the West Midlands web site:

www.go-wm.gov.uk/497745/docs/182820/603415/WMidClimateActionPlan





Stoke-on-Trent Governance Commission

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The Governance Commission has issued a call for written evidence to national, regional and local organisations and people with a closing date of 31 December 2007.

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The Stoke-on-Trent Governance Commission chaired by Professor Michael Clarke CBE MA DL was launched on the 5th October 2007 by the Local Government Minister John Healey, to consider options for future governance arrangements for Stoke-on-Trent City Council. Plans for the Commission were developed in consultation with Mark Meridith, the Elected Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent.

John Healey in launching the Governance Commission said:

'I am delighted to be able to announce the establishment of this Commission under the chairmanship of Professor Michael Clarke. This is a key stage in determining the options for the best possible governance arrangements for Stoke-on-Trent to deliver the strong effective and accountable leadership the City needs to deal with the economic, social and community cohesion challenges which it faces.'

The Local Government White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities published in October 2006 which proposed simplifying the options for mayors meant that the current Stoke-on-Trent City Council governance model of Mayor and Council Manager was no longer an option. The proposal to establish a Commission into the governance arrangements in Stoke was announced in Parliament on 19 January 2007 by the then Local Government Minister, Phil Woolas.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 which received Royal Assent on 30 October 2007 provides the legislative framework for introducing two stronger leadership models, with the Council having to choose between a directly elected mayor and cabinet with a four year term and an indirectly elected leader and cabinet with a four year term. The third option of a directly elected executive for four years, mentioned initially in the Bill, was rejected during its passage through the Lords.

The Governance Commission has issued a call for written evidence to national, regional and local organisations and people with a closing date of 31 December 2007. The local newspapers and media have highlighted the call for evidence and the Commission's work was featured on the BBC 1's Politics Show and Radio Stoke.

The Commission will also hold a series of oral hearings during January and February to gather further evidence. The Commission will then consider all the evidence and produce evidence based options which will be reported to the Council and Minister by the end of May 2008.

Continue →





Stoke-on-Trent Governance Commission continued

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The local newspapers and media have highlighted the call for evidence and the Commission's work was featured on the BBC 1's Politics Show and Radio Stoke.

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The other members appointed to the Commission are Professor Christine King CBE DL, Vice Chancellor of Staffordshire University, the Right Reverend Doctor Gordon Mursell, Bishop of Stafford, Ian Dudson CBE, DL, Chief Executive of Dudson Ltd, Mohammed Tufail OBE, former Chief Executive of North Staffordshire Race Equality Council and Joan Jones CBE, a former Director of the LGA serving as an expert advisor.

Any queries or for further information please contact Susan Roberts, the Governance Commission Secretariat on 0121 352 5416 or at sue.roberts@gowm.gsi.gov.uk





GOWM Ministerial visits

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Last year
GOWM
supported a
review of five
Local Compacts
across the
region.”

4th Dec CO Phil Hope Regional Compact Review Consultation Event Wolverhampton

Cabinet Office Minister Phil Hope attended the Regional Compact Review Consultation Event in Wolverhampton. The purpose of the event was to take an overview of how the Compact is working across the region. Last year GOWM supported a review of five Local Compacts across the region. This year we have been supporting a similar review of all of the 14 upper-tier Compact in the region. The event looked at outputs from that review and progress on the Compact in the region. It also looked at how the Compact can be strengthened across the region. The event was seen as an opportunity to engage the sector in contributing to the debate on developing the new Local Area Agreements in 2008.

4th Dec DCLG Hazel Blears visit to Witton Lodge Birmingham - Participatory Budgets Announcement made

Hazel Blears visited Witton Lodge, Perry Common to meet with residents and discuss the success of the regeneration scheme. Talks included tackling crime and anti-social behaviour; engaging with young people, redevelopment of the hall, the role of advisers and lessons learnt. The Minister then had a tour of Sycamore Court - Witton Lodge's flagship 40 apartment Extra Care Scheme currently managed on their behalf by the City Council providing

independent living for people with special needs. The Minister concluded this visit by switching on Witton Lodge's Christmas lights.

6th Dec DCLG Iain Wright Pathfinder visit Birmingham, Sandwell, North Staffordshire

The Minister started his trip by visiting North Shelton Community Centre, a discussion took place about the regeneration strategy across North Staffordshire at the RENEW funded Community Centre. The tour moved onto the City Waterside's Redrow Waters Edge Development. The Minister was given the opportunity to witness how new and existing communities are being brought together to create a new and integrated neighbourhood. Finally the Minister visited the Urban Living Pathfinder in Birmingham. The Minister was able to view the area and its challenges first-hand and learnt about some of the Pathfinder key delivery sites. Discussions were held on the area and its needs with some of the Urban Living Board Members and local residents.





Sub National Review

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It is well recognised that regions and localities need to respond quickly to rapidly-changing economic circumstances if they are to increase prosperity.

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It is well recognised that regions and localities need to respond quickly to rapidly-changing economic circumstances if they are to increase prosperity. In the Sub-national Economic Development and Regeneration review, (SNR for short), published in July 2007, Government recognised the need to give far more power, incentives and flexibilities to regions and local authorities to do just this.

So, what does the SNR mean in practice? Well, to begin with the regional architecture will be streamlined: The Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy will be merged into a single approach for 2010, providing greater coherence to our thinking as a consequence; Regional Assemblies will not continue in their present form and there will be an increased strategic role for Regional Development Agencies (RDAs).

The RDAs will be given a clear focus on economic growth. As part of this, RDAs will have executive responsibility for developing the single integrated regional strategy, which sets out the economic, social and environmental objectives to achieve sustainable development for each region. The strategy will be developed through close working with local authorities and other partners. They will also take on the regional planning role from Regional Assemblies and coordinate (simplified) business support across their regions.

RDAs will also have a more programme-based approach to delivery and will be expected to delegate funding to local authorities wherever possible.

Local authorities will be given more powers and stronger incentives to improve local prosperity; and ensure that people in deprived areas can benefit from and contribute to economic growth. In addition, Government will support local authorities to work with each other at the sub-regional level where this makes sense for the local economy. Local authorities will also have the role in scrutinising RDA performance.

The SNR also aims to reform Government's relationships with regions and localities. An important part of this is the appointment of Regional Ministers.

The Government will be consulting early in the New Year on proposals in the SNR and there will be a number of regional events. Ahead of this, Government is publishing an interim document setting out more details about implementation including a timetable, the planned scope of the consultation and further advice on transitional arrangements.

[Continue](#) ➔





Sub National Review continued

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The SNR also aims to reform Government's relationships with regions and localities.

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In this region, GOWM is working with Advantage West Midlands, the West Midlands Regional Assembly and local authorities to enable the smooth transition to the new arrangements. We will provide further updates on progress in future editions of this Bulletin.

For more information contact:

andrea.whitworth@gowm.gsi.gov.uk or

neil.powell@gowm.gsi.gov.uk or visit the Treasury web site at:

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spending_review/spend_csr07/reviews/subnational_econ_review.cfm





State of the Region Report 2007

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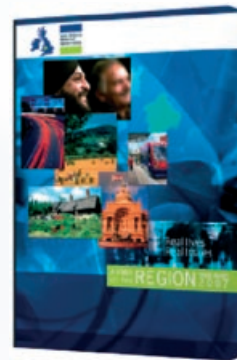
The first report was published in 2004 and this year's update represents the last of the present cycle.

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On October 19th 2007, the West Midlands Regional Observatory published the fourth in its series of State of the Region reports. These reports are published on a four year cycle, with a major report followed by three shorter update reports. The first report was published in 2004 and this year's update represents the last of the present cycle. Rather than attempt to cover all aspects of the Region, the update reports focus in more detail on some of the key issues we face. Previous editions have covered attitudes and perceptions, skills, rural issues, culture, transport and the knowledge economy. All of these are heavily influenced by regional strategies and policies. This year's report is slightly different. It focuses on two of the key external issues which impact on the region but which we have little control over – climate change and changing population demographics.

Climate Change

There can be little doubt that climate change has risen to the top of the political agenda. It has been described as “the most serious problem we are facing today”. The report presents evidence of how the Region's climate has changed and how it is projected to change in the future. It also looks at the implications of the changes and what they mean for regional policy makers.



Amongst its key findings are:

- Average temperatures have risen by 0.6oC in the last century, rainfall has dropped in summer and risen in winter - projections show these trends will continue
- There will be more frequent extreme weather events such as flooding, storms and tornados
- Future climate change is inevitable – the scale will depend on CO2 emissions now and in the future
- There are two types of response to climate change, mitigation – minimising the extent of future climate change; and adaptation – reducing the impact of the changes that do happen
- Water management will be a crucial issue, particularly in the south east of the Region – increasing demand will conflict with reduced supply in the summer
- There will be potential benefits for industries such as agriculture (with a longer growing season), tourism (if natural and built environments are protected), environmental and construction technologies
- Behavioural change is crucial to both mitigation and adaptation, but will only happen if the infrastructure is in place to allow it.

Continue →





State of the Region Report 2007 continued



The report presents evidence about the current population of the Region and how it is changing over time.



Changing population demographics

The population profile of the West Midlands is changing and these changes will continue in the future. These changes have major implications for regional policies and for the way that services are delivered. The report presents evidence about the current population of the Region and how it is changing over time. It looks at the challenges this will present to regional policy makers and service providers. Amongst the key points are:

- The population of the Region has risen by 3.3% since 1981 and is set to rise by 6% in the next 20 years
- Most of the rise in population is amongst the over 60s and non-White British ethnic groups
- Migration has seen younger people moving to urban areas and older people to more rural ones, so the population of rural areas is growing but ageing whilst urban areas have an increasingly young age profile
- Recent years have seen a large rise in migrants from overseas coming to the Region, particularly from the new EU member states like Poland as well as those from traditional sources such as India and Pakistan
- Increases in single person households will mean a greater demand for housing, increasing pressure on land and potentially conflicting with increased risk of flooding and other

consequences of climate change

- Migration trends mean urban and rural populations are increasingly different, we must decide whether to try to reverse that or accept it and adapt
- The number of jobs in the Region is forecast to grow faster than the working age population, we will need to find ways of filling that gap from those groups which currently have low employment rates or from migrants to the Region
- Reversing change will mean finding ways of providing to provide the environment and lifestyle out migrants aspire to in urban areas
- Accepting the change will mean adapting services, communities and infrastructure to the changing demands that will result



For further information please contact the West Midlands Regional Observatory on 0121 202 3250 / enquiries@wmro.org





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