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For Immediate Release

M40 resurfacing works to reduce noise

A local action group's campaign, to reduce noise from stretches of the M40, received a huge boost this week with news that scheduled maintenance works being carried out between junction 3 and 4 will use a quiet surface replacement material.

Last year, the local action group M40 Chilterns Environment Group (M40CEG), in conjunction with Wycombe District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and other partners, submitted a proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act (SCA) to reduce road noise through resurfacing, improving sound barriers and implementing speed and night time restrictions between junctions 3 and 8.

Although this proposal was shortlisted for implementation and despite numerous meetings, no positive results or suggestions for possible alternative action were forthcoming from the Highways Agency and Department for Transport. The new coalition government confirmed its commitment to the SCA, and M40CEG and Wycombe District Council continued to lobby for action to reduce the noise caused by this motorway.

When information was received that the Highways Agency was planning to resurface the stretch of motorway between junction 3 and 4, M40CEG the council wasted no time in contacting local MP Steve Baker to ask for confirmation that resurfacing was in fact being carried out using a quieter surface material. The Highways Agency responded positively and promptly to this request.

Dr Ken Edwards, Chairman of M40CEG, commented: "We are delighted that the Highways Agency will be using this quieter surface material, as this will have a large impact on the noise levels created at this junction. It was reassuring to see the response we had from our local MP and the Highways Agency, and we are looking forward to a closer working relationship in the future. We hope that this really will signal the first step in addressing this 40 year old problem."

Councillor Lesley Clarke, Leader of Wycombe District Council, commented: “This is great news and a really good example of the 'Big Society' agenda in action, showing how communities, working together with their local council, can influence and affect their areas for the better. We would like to thank Steve Baker MP and Dr Ken Edwards and will continue to work with the local community and our partner organisations to ensure further action is taken in this matter.”

For more information about the M40CEG or to get involved in their campaign to tackle the noise generated by the M40 contact Dr Ken Edwards 01494 881266, or email: m40cc@btinternet.com.

ENDS

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: Becky Wotherspoon, Senior Communications Officer, on 01494 421207