

A photograph of a lush green field with several sheep resting on the grass. In the background, there is a dense line of trees under a clear sky. The text 'LEGLAG LAND' is overlaid in yellow.

LEGLAG LAND

a view from outside

Adrian Phillips

Three questions

- Why is the LegLag land so important to Cheltenham?

- What's happening elsewhere near the Cotswolds?
- What's the national context?



12/1945

Cheltenham 1945

Cheltenham, UK

The Park

Up
Hatherley

Shurdington Road

Google earth

Imagery Date: 1/1/1945



51°53'46.46" N 2°04'56.87" W elev 62 m

Eye alt 6.84 km

West of
Cheltenham
1945

Approx. edge of Cheltenham



Traffic lights

Shurdington Road

Shurdington half a mile SW

Image © 2013 The GeoInformation Group

Google earth

Imagery Date: 1/1/1945



1945

51°52'47.47" N 2°05'35.68" W elev 73 m

Eye alt 1.98 km

West of Cheltenham 2007

Approx. edge of Cheltenham in 1945

New areas of
development

Shurdington Road

© 2013 Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky
Image © 2013 Getmapping plc

Google earth

Imagery Date: 3/16/2007



1945

51°52'51.88" N 2°05'37.04" W elev 73 m

Eye alt 4.11 km



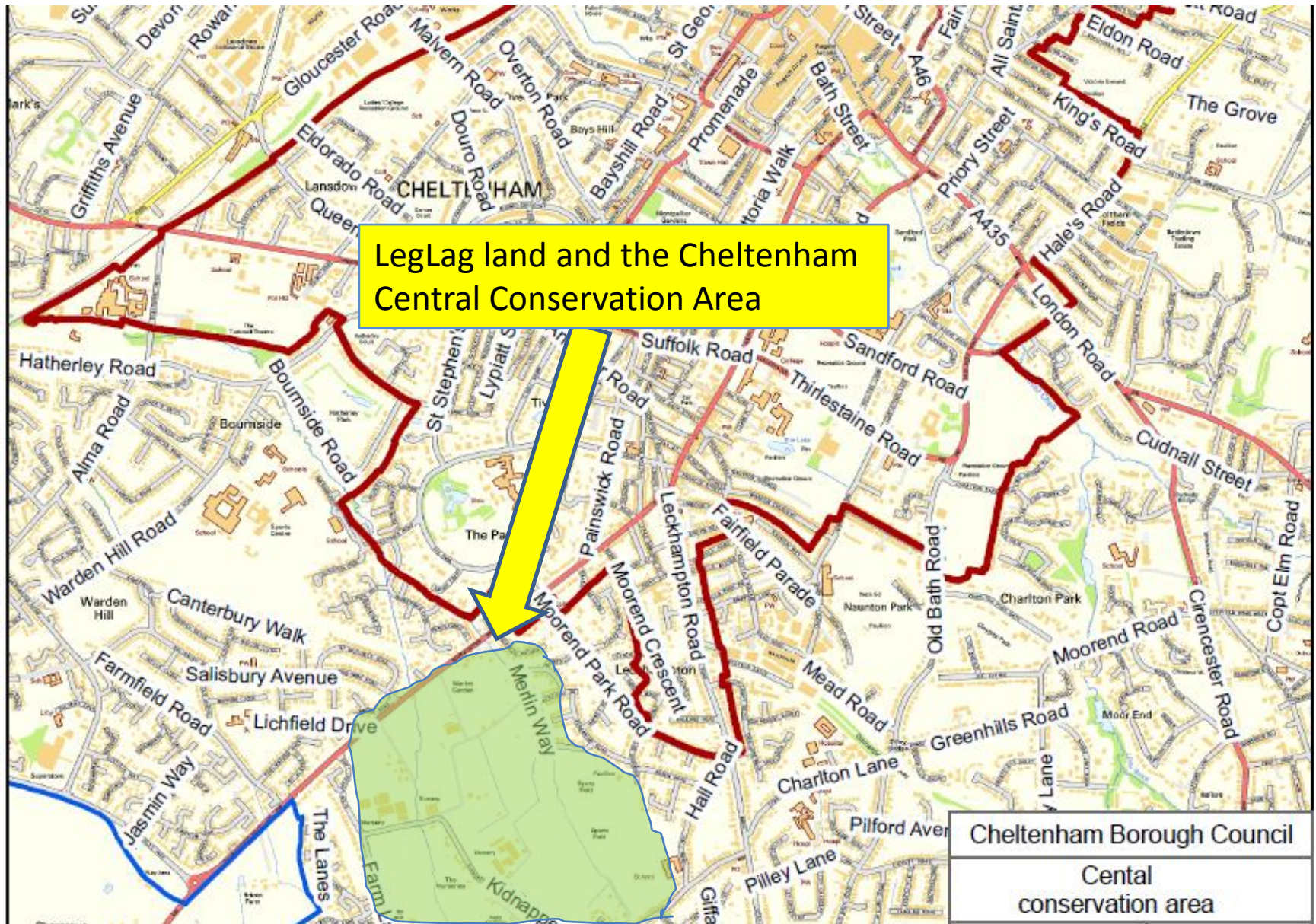
A green edge to the town seen from outside



.. or from within

*With thanks to Martin Williams
for this and other photos*

The strategic position of the LegLag land



What does this tell us?

- Much post war development west of Cheltenham
- But Leglag land little changed since the war
- It still brings countryside to the edge of the Regency town

Diversion 1: A green connection to the heart of Cheltenham











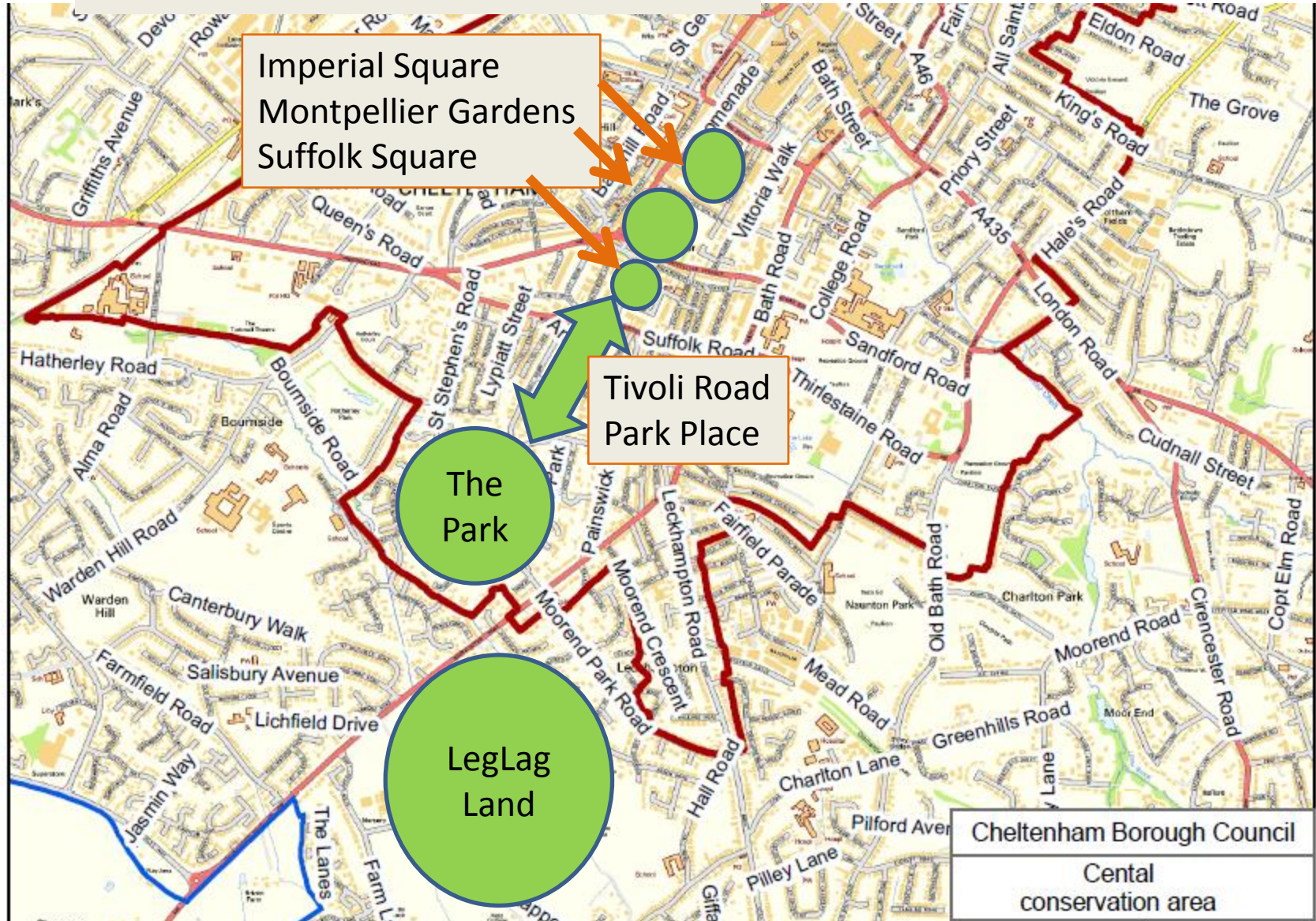








Cheltenham's Green Link?



LegLag land – a vision for Local Green Space?



**Linking town to
countryside**



Giving a sense of space ...



Producing food ...







A place for walking in large groups....



... or small



Maybe a village green too?



Twynning, Glos.

With new uses like allotments





...a community orchard ...

... or a city farm

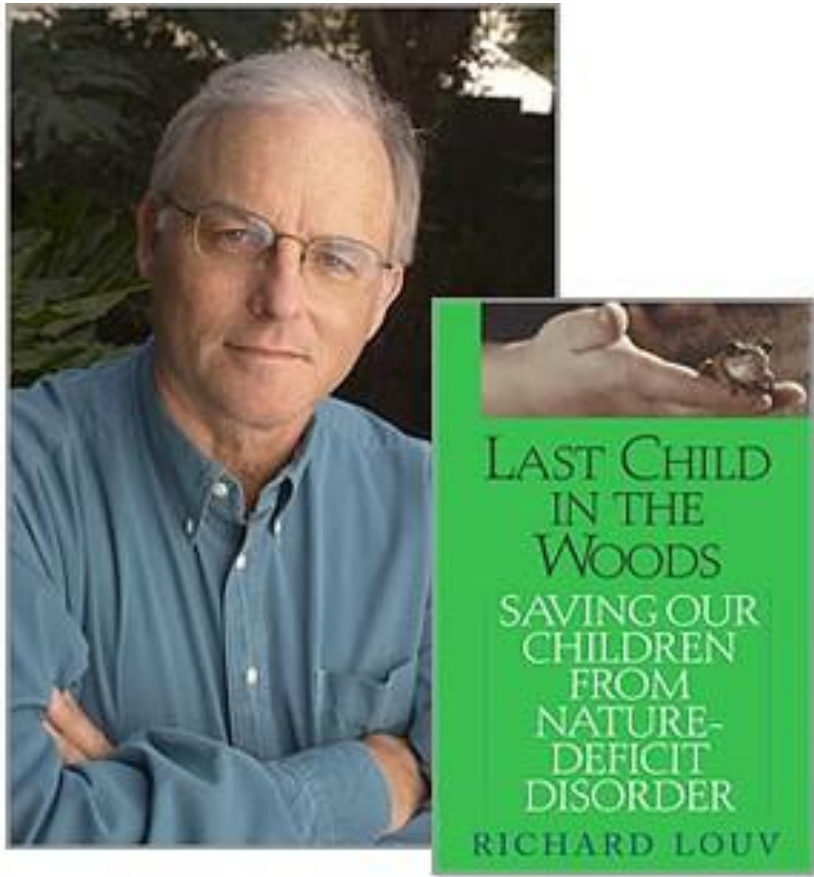


Diversion 2: Nature Deficit Disorder



What's the problem?

“Nature deficit disorder”



- 22% of children play in local nature – 20 years ago it was 50%
- Fewer than 10% now play in ‘wild nature’
- 1 in 3 children don’t know a magpie
- 1 in 2 don’t know a bee from a wasp (9 out of 10 recognise a dalek)
- 1 in 3 of 2-15 year-olds are obese or overweight
- Rising levels of mental health problems in young people

•Is there a connection?

Why is this happening?



The causes

- **Risk averse society (health and safety culture)**
- **Traffic danger and “stranger danger”**
- **Electronic technology and entertainment**
- **Low priority for schools**
- **Lack of somewhere to go**



Why should we care?

Children who spend time in nature:

- 1. Tend to be healthier**
- 2. Tend to do better in school**
- 3. Have higher self-esteem**
- 4. Are more capable and confident**
- 5. Feel more connected with nature**
- 6. Will be tomorrow's conservation leaders**

Just as children need good nutrition and adequate sleep, they may very well need contact with nature



What can we do about it?



But the kids still need somewhere to go!

A policy aim for LegLag: Local Green Space

from the NPPF:

76. *“Local communities should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space, local communities will be able to rule out new development*”
- 77 *“The designation should only be used where the green space is:*
- *....close to the community it serves;*
 - *special to a local community ... for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
 - *is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land”.*

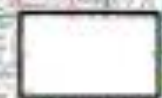
And possibly
incorporating a *small*
area of well-designed,
affordable housing



The wider context – the edge of the Cotswolds

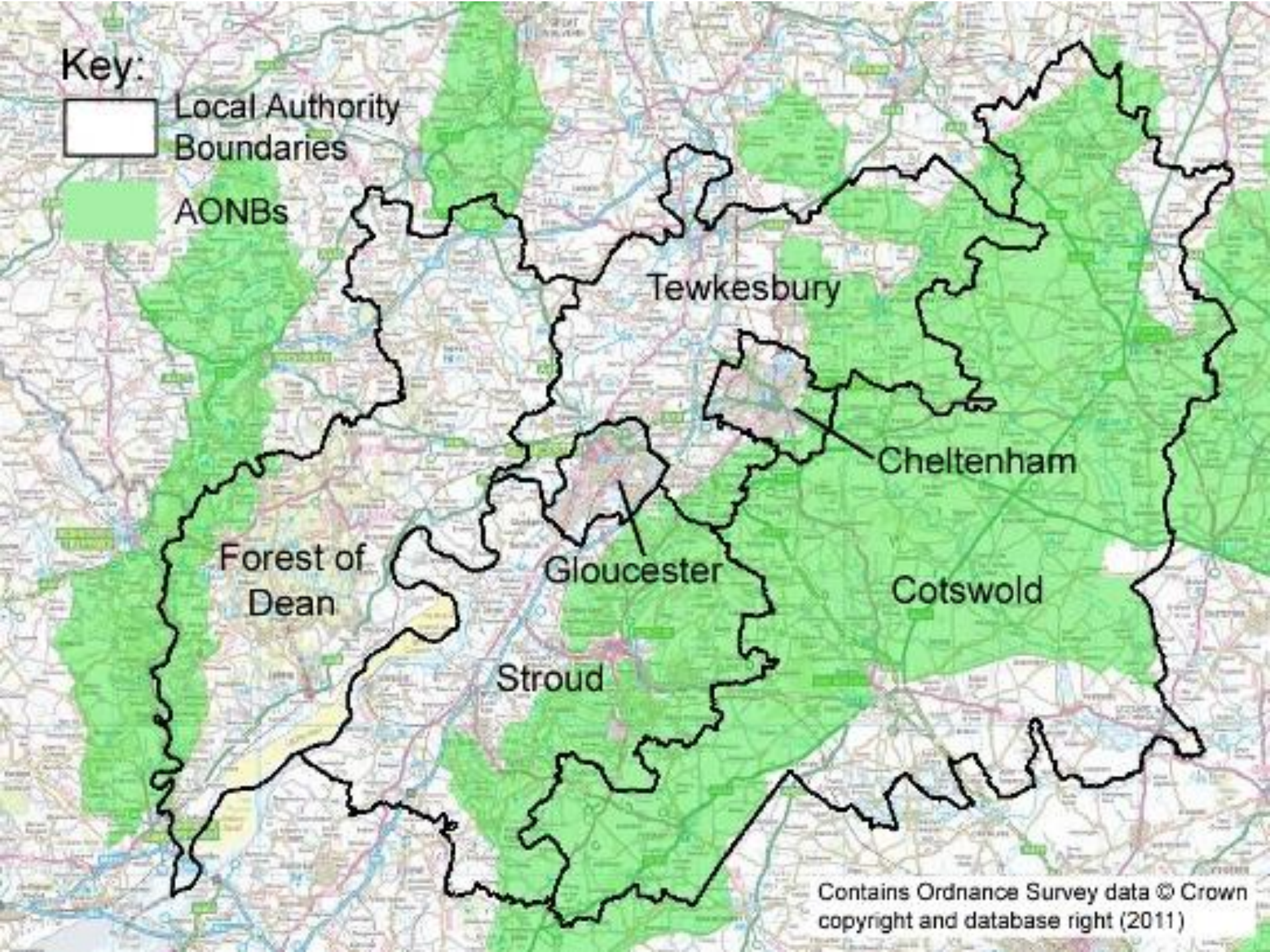


Key:



Local Authority
Boundaries

AONBs



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown
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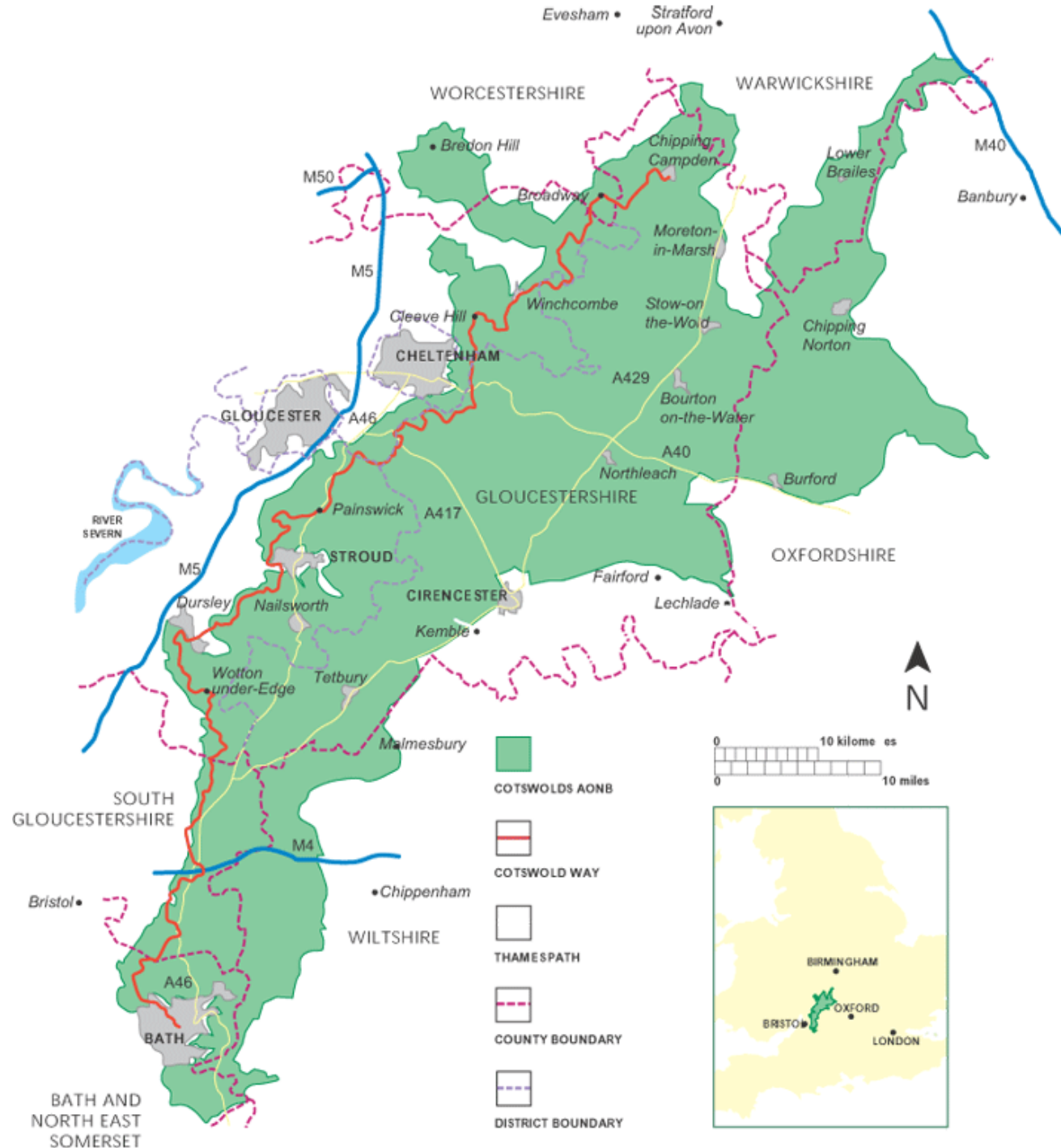
COTSWOLDS AONB

- UK's largest AONB
- Covers 790 sq. m.
- Administered by statutory board (CCB)
- Skirts east of Cheltenham

Purpose: protect natural beauty of the area

The “setting” has been the subject of CC Board policy

And therefore affects LegLag land



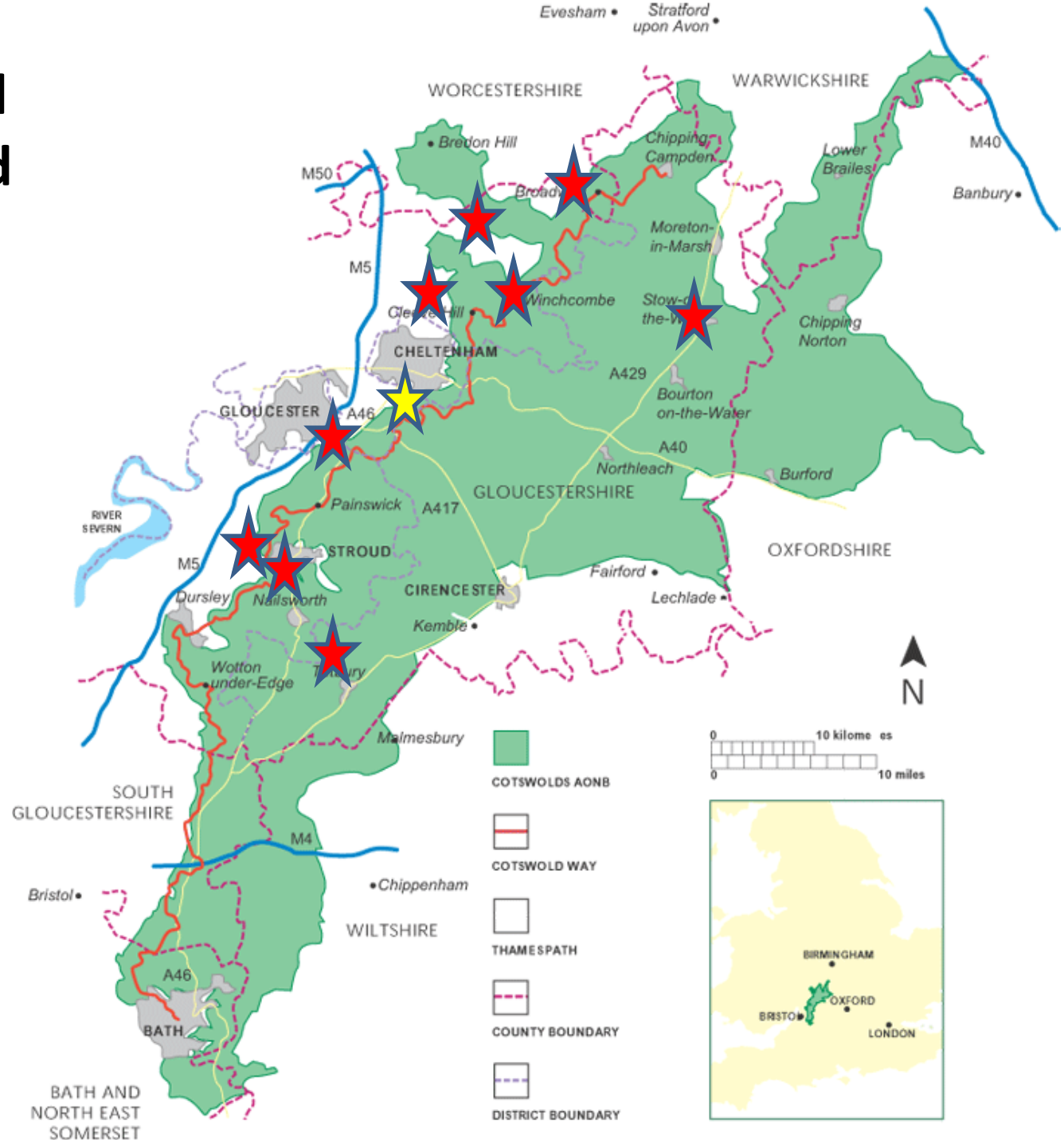
What the Board says about the setting of the AONB :

- **It's the area where development may impact on the Cotswolds AONB**
- **Local authorities should consider this when : 1) making plans and 2) deciding on development**

The Cotswold Edge – Stroud to Broadway

Major housing proposals 2013

Recently approved or submission expected soon





Why all is this happening now?



NATIONALLY

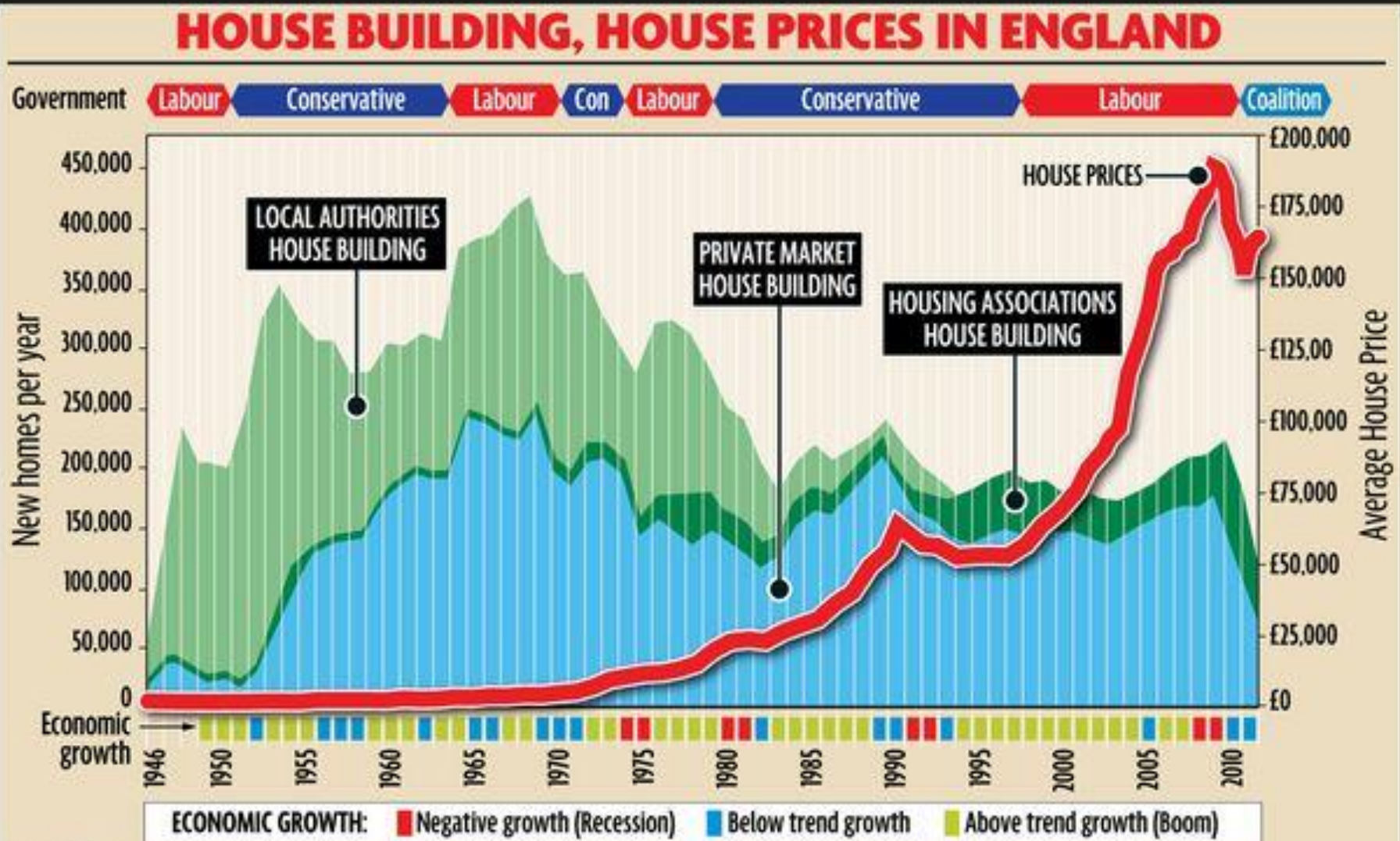
- A housing shortage, especially affordable housing
- A near panic about lack of growth in the economy
- Anti-planning rhetoric and ideology

LOCALLY

- No agreed local plans



A housing shortage, especially affordable housing

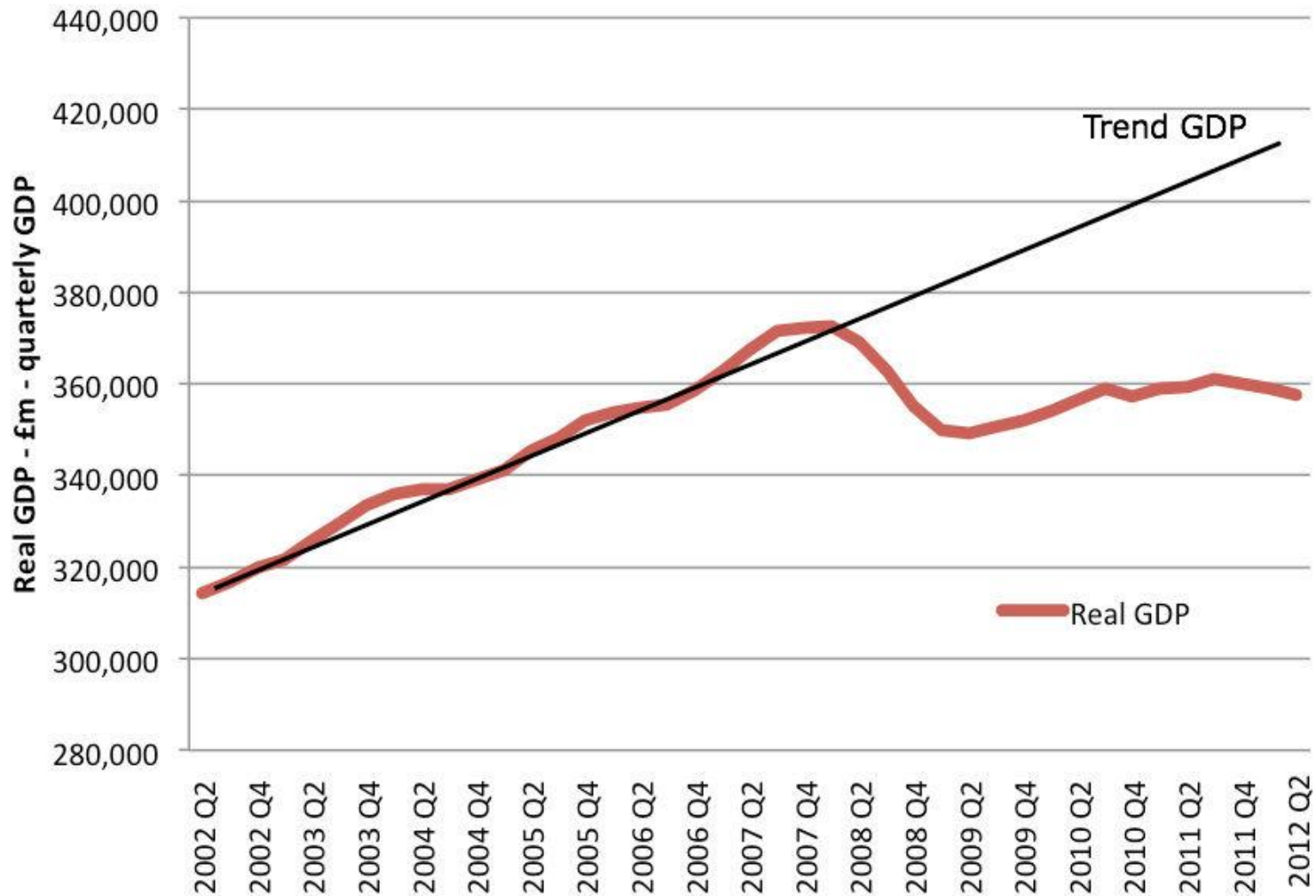




- Forecast growth in households: 232,000 p.a. until 2033
- Current rate of home construction: c. 100,000 p.a.

Alarm about lack of growth in the economy – flat-lining for >5 years

Real GDP



“This government means business in delivering plans to help people, build new homes and kick-start the economy” - David Cameron, Sept. 2012



“We need a massive house building programme to address the housing crisis and to get the economy moving again ” – Chris Williamson, Shadow Local Govt. Minister, March 2013

But is the slump in house-building due to a lack of supply (a planning problem) – or a lack of demand in the economy and available housing finance?



Budget was designed to encourage housing market - but will it just increase prices?



Diversion 3: a better way to charge up the economy through the housing sector

- >1 in 5 households in fuel poverty – spending more than 10% of income to keep warm**
- Up to 1 in 3.5 households may be in fuel poverty by 2016**
- UK homes the least energy efficient in Europe**
- Energy costs are going only one way!**





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14 July 2011 Last updated at 15:27

Fuel poverty affects one in five households

More than a fifth of all households in the UK were affected by fuel poverty in 2009, government figures have shown.

Higher fuel bills meant the number of homes affected rose by one million, or 22%, to 5.5 million, the Department of Energy and Climate Change said.

A household is described as being in fuel poverty when it has to spend more than 10% of its income keeping warm.

DECC predicts that the numbers for 2010 and 2011 will have increased because of further rises in the price of energy.

454 Share

Tina Watkin says 'I'm worried about putting the heating up!'

Related Stories



The solution

- Government gets £4b from carbon taxes annually
- Use it for a national programme to end fuel poverty
- Help 600,000 homes with insulation, renewable energy and modern boilers (av. grant of £6,500, will cut energy bills by £310 p.a.)
- This would:
 - *create thousands of jobs*
 - *boost the economy*
 - *cut carbon emissions*
- Better than the Green Deal
- Join the campaign:
<http://www.energybillrevolution.org/>



End this

And begin this



Anti-planning rhetoric and ideology



“Frankly, I am frustrated by the hoops you have to jump through to get anything done”



“The environmental taliban”



Opponents of planning reform are “hysterical scare-mongering latter -day Luddites”



But is deregulation is the best way to promote economic recovery?
How about Ireland, Greece, Spain?

The planning system needs defending

- It's about taking difficult decisions about land use in a ***democratic*** way
- It's about securing the ***long term public interest*** in the use of land (e.g. green space v. new development)
- It is ***not*** about giving decision making to developers, nor (a few exceptions apart) to central government

But that is exactly where we are now

- No agreement on the Joint Core Strategy till late 2014
- No up to date local plan for Cheltenham
- Developers lining up to try their luck
- Decisions will be taken – ad hoc - by Inspectors after enquiry, using the NPPF
- “Development outside the settlement boundary of Cheltenham, probably in the GB, will be necessary”
- 5 years+ supply of new housing land requirement is being used to justify development on green- not brown-field sites (CPRE/NT study)

So what should LegLag do?

- Show what new housing will mean for local services (traffic etc.)
- Make the positive case for LegLag land as potential Local Green Space
- Show how strategically important the area is to Cheltenham and the Cotswolds
- Get your minds round the wider context
- Be prepared for a really tough fight!

Thank you
- and
good luck

