



## Guildford Greenbelt Group (GGG) Press Release

Wednesday 11 March 2015

### **“ The Archers” in Guildford – their fight is our fight**

**June Spencer OBE - the actress who plays Peggy Woolley (previously Peggy Archer) in the BBC Radio 4 “The Archers” programme - has agreed to be Patron of GGG. She has spoken about parallels between the plot in the Archers and what she is facing in real life.**

June has kindly accepted the role of Patron of the GGG Campaign Group (not the political party, which is separate, since as a BBC employee she cannot get involved in politics). Guildford Greenbelt Group Campaign are delighted to welcome her as their Patron.

June Spencer’s voice is better known than her name. As Peggy Woolley her voice is familiar to millions. She was interviewed by Guildford Greenbelt Group (GGG) about their campaign to save the Guildford metropolitan greenbelt from development.

The interview covers the parallels between the fictional world of Ambridge and June’s real life village of West Horsley, both of which are challenged on all sides by the voracious appetite of property developers.

June does not think that the local Council have been entirely straightforward with the borough’s residents. She comments about the consultation process: *“They are rather devious, aren’t they?”*.

Jules Cranwell, who interviewed June, commented:

*“June’s passion for preserving the character, and tranquillity, of her village, and similar environments across the country, is evident in her comments. It throws a welcome spotlight on the potential impact the proposed assault on the Greenbelt would have, for the current, and future generations, not least on the already stretched infrastructure.*

*June’s comments show that she is passionate about the need to protect the Greenbelt for current, and future generations.”*

June’s final comment says it all: *“Hands off the Greenbelt!”*.

## **1. You Tube link to the June Spencer interview**

The interview can be viewed on this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG2TM9VsyF4&feature=youtu.be>

## **2. Background to Guildford Greenbelt Group**

**Guildford Greenbelt Group formed more than a year ago. People across the borough came together because the Greenbelt and countryside within the borough are suffering a major assault by the local council, under the National Planning Policy Framework.**

**Around 15500 homes are proposed for the borough of Guildford in the period to 2031, an increase of approx. 25% compared to current housing. Almost three quarters of this increase is proposed to be sited on the Greenbelt or countryside. Target sites include the pretty hamlet of Ockham (2100 homes), the village of West Horsley on the edge of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (700 homes), Gosden Hill Farm (2000 homes) and Blackwell Farm on the nationally important Hog's Back, a famous landmark which is actually within the Surrey Hills AONB itself (more than 3000 homes).**

It has become clear that Guildford Borough Council is unwilling to listen to the population of Guildford. There were more than 20 000 responses to each consultation but there has been minimal change from the council. It seems clear that proposals to defer the next draft of the local plan until after the next election are a matter of kicking the issue into the long grass, and that if the current administration returns, so will their earlier proposals.

The members of GGG have agreed that the consultation process does not permit proper participation in local decision-making and the concept of "localism" is a fiction. We feel that the only way to participate in local decision-making is to seek election as councillors. We will enable the voters of Guildford to determine their own future.

Since formation as a political party, it has become clear that voters in Waverley , Woking and Mole Valley are also interested in GGG.

Further information on GGG is available on the GGG facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/Guildfordgreenbelt>

Or on its website:

GGG website <http://guildfordgreenbeltgroup.co.uk>

GGG public meetings open to all members of the public, will be held as follows:

Wednesday 18 March 2015 – Normandy Community Hall – 7.30pm