

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 05 February 2026 00:03:03 UTC+00:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/25/2057
Categories: Comments Received

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 05/02/2026 12:03 AM.

Application Summary

Address:	Land North of Little Slaughterford Chapel Road Barns Green West Sussex
Proposal:	Proposed development of 68 dwellings with vehicular and pedestrian accesses, public open space, hard and soft landscaping and associated works including supporting foul and surface water drainage works, and works to existing culverted watercourse on site.
Case Officer:	Alice Johnson

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 1 Park View Cottages Sandhills Road Barns Green

Comments Details

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Customer objects to the Planning Application

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- Design
- Highway Access and Parking
- Loss of General Amenity
- Other
- Overdevelopment
- Privacy Light and Noise
- Trees and Landscaping

C Objection Letter

o RE: DC/25/2057: Land North of Little Slaughterford, Chapel Road, Barns Green West Sussex

m

m 1) Other: Proposal in in direct conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework Dec 2024 :
e in accordance with Section 2 of the NPPF Dec 2024, 14 in that the adverse impact of allowing
nt development conflicts with the Barns Green & Itchingfield Neighbourhood (made) plan is likely
s: to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits with conditions a) the plan being made
08/10/2025 and b) the Neighbourhood plan identified sites to meet its housing allocation.

BACKGROUND:

A. Horsham District Council (HDC) put out a call for sites for development in February 2017 and the Itchingfield Parish Council (IPC) duly responded to this and engaged constructively with the IPC. Barns Green & Itchingfield villagers volunteered a considerable amount of their time and effort to assist IPC and HDC with this effort and 28 sites were proposed in the preparation of the Barns Green & Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan (BGINP). Following this there was a public exhibition of sites (20/01/2018) and each was considered using a set of agreed criteria and duly voted upon by the community. As such, a number of sites were proposed by the IPC to HDC. The results of this indicated that the site proposed by Miller Homes in DC/25/2057 for development (Site 28) had the largest number of objections (56) in a democratic and open process [see document 1].

B. The reasons for the objections at this time included the following: 1) 'the proposed site was Site 28 (3.2 hectares) was classified as 'unsuitable for development in the SHEELAA (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment), 2) there was a significant issue over the deliverability of this site. the site was and still is subject to an agricultural tenancy, and the tenant (the owner of adjacent land) made it clear that he would resist any attempt to terminate the tenancy, 3) it is a greenfield site, 4) the development, on sloping ground, would be highly visible from the road and other houses, 5) the site has listed buildings on either side and is near two others, 6) the development would out of character with the village, 7) vehicle access

onto Chapel Road would have a significant effect on traffic, 8) the development would harm the rural environment of the parish, 9) the development is likely to exacerbate surface water runoff onto Chapel, 10) the housing density as currently planned is too high for the character of the village, 11) the development will harm the infrastructure of the village, by causing traffic problems in Chapel Road, 12) the eastern boundary of the site abuts a tract of Ancient Woodland, 13) feedback from village residents after the exhibition of possible development sites, the development of this site was almost universally opposed (see Itchingfield Parish Council histogram on feedback from exhibition 20/01/2018)'.

C. The proposal to develop Site 28 thus conflicts with the Barns Green and Itchingfield Neighbourhood plan (BGINHP) 2024-2031 which was approved at referendum on 04/09/2025, was subject to a successful examination and duly made on 08/10/2025, was rejected in the IPC call for sites, with the BGINHP planning referendum being adopted with a 92.05% in favour of a YES vote. It was also rejected by the HDC and yet now it appears it is being considered by HDC - for reasons unspecified and not made known to the IPC or the community which spent so much time and effort in responding to HDC in their plan to increase development in accordance with Government requests.

D. HDC should be aware that the Barns Green village is not against development per se, but not on this particular field/site right in the centre of the village (not on the 'edge' as the developer contends) and so close to the other large 'Sumners Fields' housing development. The village already has a history of housing development, notably 'The Ashmiles' (69 homes built by the Berkeley Group, a collection of 2, 3, 4 & 5 bedroom houses) and 'Sumners Fields' (32 homes built by Sigma Homes, still in development in 2026, a collection of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses.

E. The Planning and Infrastructure Bill 2025 aims to improve local community involvement in planning decisions, ensuring that local residents' views are considered in what gets built and where. The proposed development (Site 28) thus conflicts directly with this principle in completely ignoring the Neighbourhood Plan recommendations for appropriate development sites <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3946>. What sort of confidence will we as tax payers and voters feel if we feel that our voices once sought are completely disregarded?

F. Once adopted a neighbourhood plan forms part of an LPA's development plan. Its policies should be used to inform decision making on planning applications. The NPPF states that where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including neighbourhood plans which form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. MHCLG< National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated February 2025), paragraph 12

G. Once a neighbourhood plan is adopted, it holds greater weight in decision-making when taking account of an LPA's housing supply position MHCLG, Government guidance: Neighbourhood planning (updated September 2020)

H. Where the local planning authority publishes notice of a referendum, the emerging neighbourhood plan should be given more weight, while also taking account of the extent of unresolved objections to the plan and its degree of consistency with NPPF Dec 2024.

REFERENCES:

Document 1: IPCNP Proposed sites - feedback count
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WTY_i7hV4_dMzsnBWWz8py8YoKdBqaTB/view

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-planning-and-infrastructure-bill/guide-to-the-planning-and-infrastructure-bill>
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#:~:text=A%20neighbourhood%20plan%20attains%20the,of%20the%20statutory%20development%20plan.>
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#decision-taking>
<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3946>
https://www.horsham.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/147951/Itchingfield-Decision-Statement-18-June-2025.pdf

2) MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Flood risk and water issues

A. In the presentation to the village by Miller Homes on 08/08/2025 in their presentation on water issues they stated they were aware of flooding in the village. Indeed, the post code for the Barns Green village shop (RH13 0PS), right opposite the development on GOV.Uk the yearly chance of flooding is HIGH and the yearly chance of flooding between 2040 and 2060 is HIGH. The supporting documents from Miller Homes however state that reports of flooding are 'anecdotal' and this appears to be a conclusion based on Phase 1 'desk study.' It is a well-known fact in the village that the area suffers from water surface run off and during heavy rainfall the village shop becomes flooded, the water carrying through into properties in the Hordens, behind the shop. While desk studies have their place they also come with significant disadvantages, not least i) they may rely on outdated or incomplete data, ii) lack of on-site verification, and iii) increased risk of design flaws. There is no substitute for a full onsite inspection as well as discussion with local residents in order to benefit from their own knowledge of the area and its problems. This has not been undertaken.

REFERENCES:

<https://www.mapl.co.uk/2025/02/27/do-desk-studies-really-cut-costs/>

B. The plan from Miller Homes is to 'open up a culvert through site to put back to natural water course rather than through a culvert which gives more capacity so will drain away through the site to Muntham Gil towards the south where it currently goes' (Public recorded meeting 08/08/2025). This process is otherwise known as 'daylighting'. From my understanding the principle of this practice is sound as a way of opening up buried water courses and restoring them to more natural conditions to provide multiple benefits (Wild et al 2011), but there needs further clarification and explanation of this in view of a) there is no 'guarantee' that this this will deal with the issue off surface run off from the site, b) the issue of surface run off is a known problem due to the incline upward / slope of the land relative to Chapel Road (and acknowledged in verbal comments by the developer and recorded in the 08/07/2025 public meeting), c) the report appears to have been prepared, reviewed and approved by the same person with no third party oversight from what I can determine - is this standard practice?, d) the waterlogged nature of the site, d) the proposed intention to remove the large hedge on Chapel Road which has not been accounted for in terms of its role in water retention (see section 4 on hedgerow removal) and reducing risks of flooding.

C. Opening up / "daylighting" a culvert and draining a housing development site involves complex, high-risk engineering that often encounters significant environmental, structural and sometimes legal challenges. While 'daylighting' is generally preferred over culverting to restore natural watercourses, it can introduce immediate problems if not managed correctly, including a) downstream flooding, b) contamination risks (i.e. old buried culverts may hide contaminated

soil or sediments which can expose stagnant water, trapped pollutants), c) removing the culvert destroys existing habitats and can cause significant immediate erosion and sediment runoff, destroying aquatic ecosystems, d) can lead to the destabilisation of surrounding ground affecting new foundations, especially in instances of poor soil, of which clay (the soil on that site) is one type, e) there may be other undetected underground utilities that could be damaged during the removal. Above all there is the issue of maintenance of the water system when the developer has gone, leaving the village with a potential major problem. A third party / independent study should be made of this area which also incorporates local knowledge as well as technical opinion on this issue.

D. 'It is important to remember that focusing solely on restoring individual sections of streams may be insufficient to address problems throughout the broader watershed. Additional factors that need to be addressed include reducing fertilizer use, fixing leaking sewer pipes, installing stormwater retention ponds, and replacing pavement with vegetation, all of which can help reduce nutrient inputs to surface waters throughout a watershed' (Hilbert, G (2022) Yale Environmental Review <https://environment-review.yale.edu/shedding-light-stream-daylighting>)

REFERENCES:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/environment/flooding-and-flood-risk-management/apply-for-land-drainage-consent/buckinghamshire-council-culvert-policy/5-impacts-of-culverting/>
https://www.bottomupinfrastructure.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/HRF_Daylighting-Moselle-Brook-UCL-Note-Final.pdf
<https://environment-review.yale.edu/shedding-light-stream-daylighting>

3) MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Infrastructure / community assets / sewerage and electricity

A. The development will have a detrimental effect on the local Barns Green village shop increasing congestion and making it more difficult for people to stop and park in order to buy provisions as well as the Queens Head public house where inter alia, people will no longer be able to enjoy the views from the much-loved village pub over the rural landscape instead looking UP at a suburban development.

B. Sewerage: there are real problems with the current sewerage treatment plant at Barns Green with overflows noted, the addition of 68 new homes will only make this worse, in addition to the 32 dwellings at 'Sumners Fields' already.

C. Electricity: the proposed site will impose increased electricity demands on a system that is already inadequate for purpose, the 'Sumners Fields' development in Barns Green still being run on a generator. The proposals state that the properties will be on heat pumps, this imposing a considerable strain on the available capacity of the electricity network in Barns Green.

4) MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Removal of ancient a 'protected' and 'important' hedgerow

A. The developer intends to remove the long hedgerow at the front of the development as it looks onto Chapel Road. The hedgerow along Chapel Road is regarded in law as ancient and 'important', being: i) at least 30 years old, ii) has a continuous length of 100 metres with a gap of 2 metres for access to the field, iii) runs alongside a public bridleway or footpath and iv) marks a pre 1850 boundary. According to the law 1997 Hedgerows Act 1997 the developers have to consult the Parish Council (Section 5, part 3), regarding the removal and provide

adequate justification of this 'The Hedgerows Regulations 1997: A Guide to the Law and Good Practice'

B. Hedgerows were planted as a result of the I(E)nclosure Act 1773 (during George III) and date between 1760 and 1820 and some protected by the specific Enclosure Act+ Some hedges are indeed older than this. A formula has been developed for dating hedges based on the number of tree and shrub species per unit length. This is known as 'Hooper's Formula'. The number of tree and shrub species in a 30-metre length of hedge can indicate its age, with one species for each 100 years. A single species hedge is likely to be less than 100 years old whilst a 1,000 year old hedge is likely to contain ten to twelve species. As far as I am aware there has been no attempt by the developer Miller Homes to ascertain the age of the hedge and thus it's cultural importance.

C. This hedgerow in particular has other properties that make this 100 metre hedgerow important from other perspectives: a) in reducing flood risk by holding soil on the land and not in water courses which would reduce water quality and silt them up (Reeve 2025), it being the longest hedgerow in the centre of Barns Green, slowing down water flow allowing water to soak into the ground more effectively and reducing surface water run-off (a typical hedgerow of 100 metres storing between 300-750 cubic metres of water: Reeve 2025), the proposal making no reference to this in their calculations, b) in acts as a visual buffer to 'reduce the suburban feel of the proposed estate'. The proposed estate will drastically change the rural setting'. (3.4 Spatial Vision and Objectives Nov 2015 HDPF)', c) the hedgerow contributing to the aesthetics of the village 'creating a natural and visually appealing boundary that enhances the landscape while supporting local wildlife. Well-maintained hedges can provide a charming, rustic look, contributing to the overall character and biodiversity of the area'. Aesthetics, such as traditional architecture and natural features like hedges, are integral to the identity and charm of village life. (3.4 Spatial Vision and Objectives Nov 2015 HDPF)', d) Hedges support a range of flora in addition to the basic structure of trees and shrubs. This includes a number of climbing plants such as Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and 'scramblers' such as Dog-roses (*Rosa canina*) and Brambles (*Rubus fruticosus*) along with a wide range of herbaceous species growing in and around the base. This mix of species provides a source of nectar and pollen from early spring until well into winter, supporting a wide and varied range of insects. Alongside flora, old hedges support a wide range of animal life, often similar to that found in woodlands, especially woodland margins. Hedges with trees and taller shrubs provide song posts and dense cover for nesting birds, while old trees provide holes for bats and birds as well as deadwood habitats for invertebrates. Hedges provide many species, particularly small mammals, with cover to move around an area. Dr Robert Wolton, British Wildlife Journal - corridors for wildlife as land more fragmented or housing estates fragmented for species to travel and not be limited to smaller areas. Sequestration of atmospheric carbon and soil degradation and flooding 2/3 of birds species rely on hedgerows.

REFERENCES:

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/1160/contents>

DEFRA Survey Handbook (corrected 01/07/2025) 2007: prepared by Steering Group for the UK Biodiversity Action Plan for Hedgerows

Inclosure Act 1773:

An Act for the better cultivation, improvement, and regulation of the Common Arable Fields, Wastes and Commons of Pastures in the UK (13 Geo 3.c.81) - still in force (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/apgb/Geo3/13/81/contents>)

https://www.horsham.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/28641/HDPF-Sustainability-Appraisal-and-SEA-2015.pdf

Podd, S. (2024). *Hedges*: (London, Bloomsbury Wildlife, 2024). By Robert Wolton. 242 × 166 mm. 400 pp. 308 photographs, 11 diagrams, 6 tables, 3 maps, 4 appendices. ISBN 978-1-39941-171-4. Price £36 hardback. *Landscape History*, 45(2), 151-152.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01433768.2024.2407753>
https://www.horsham.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/60190/Horsham-District-Planning-Framework-November-2015.pdf

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/parks-gardens-and-landscapes/hedges/>

5) MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS : Traffic, risk, noise & pollution

A. Another 68 dwellings will result in a material increase in the number of cars in the village and going through the centre of the village of Barns Green. The development will increase congestion, noise, air CO₂ pollution (1.7 houses per unit, 68 units, 4.6 metric tonnes average per year = 531.76 metric tonnes per year This will not only affect the environment, but also posing health risks to our community, especially those living near busy roads (see 2019 Kings College Report) shows that living within 50 metres of a major road may increase your risk of developing lung cancer by up to 10 per cent. Indeed health related issues linked to development have been highlighted in caselaw ("even after considerable weight is given to the social, economic and environmental benefits ..., the substantial harm that [the developments] would cause to the character of a valued landscape and their likely significant adverse effect on human health would significantly and demonstrably outweigh those benefits" (paragraph 133): EWCA Civ 1610 . Gladman Developments Ltd v SSCLG

B. Even allowing for some of those cars being electric they will still need to draw extra capacity from an electricity system already inadequate for current needs. The public transport system into and out of Barns Green is woeful with only two buses per day out of the village and so not to imagine that people in the new development will not use their cars to their full extent and thus add to the existing problems with traffic is untenable.

REFERENCES:

Kings 2019 study Living within 50m of a major road could increase the risk of lung cancer by up to 10%, the paper also found. <http://bit.ly/KingsHEIR2019>
Gladman Developments Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government [2021] EWCA Civ 104 (03 February 2021)

C. Widening the road in the village as is the plan in the proposals has the potential to lead to more accidents (crashes) and greater severity of injuries*, due to (i) increased vehicle speeds, and ii) more complex vehicle interactions etc. Wider roads are also known to increase injury odds.

D. In 2021, there were roughly 1.72 crashes per 100 million miles traveled in rural regions. That number was just 1.19 per 100 million miles in urban areas. That means a rural VS urban driver is 44% more likely to be involved in a fatal crash.

REFERENCES:

<https://www.nfumutual.co.uk/globalassets/campaigns/rural-road-safety/rural-road-safety-report-2023.pdf>

6) MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS : Trees and Landscaping

A. In the proposals the developer states that it will provide a 15-metre buffer zone from the trees. A 15-meter buffer zone is a common minimum for general development near ancient woodlands, but for ancient and veteran trees the buffer should be calculated as the greater of 15 times the stem diameter or 5 meters from the edge of the canopy, often resulting in much larger zones than 15m, protecting roots and creating vital habitat. The 15m standard relates more to woodland boundaries, while trees themselves require more specific, often larger, protection based on their individual size, recognizing their extensive root systems extend far beyond the canopy drip line. Indeed, roots in soil are generally shallower and extend further than is commonly thought (Woodland Trust & Ancient Tree Forum. (2021). Practical Guidance - Ancient and veteran trees: Caring for special trees on farms. 'We recommend that a root protection area is usually a circular area around a tree with a radius that is fifteen times the diameter of its trunk (measured at 1.3 metres above the ground). Or, it should extend five metres beyond the spread of the tree's crown if this is a greater area. If you can accommodate a further buffer zone beyond this root protection area, do so, as this can further reduce the amount of wind-blown applications or splashing near the tree'.

REFERENCES:

Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions (Gov.uk 14/01/2022)

Woodland Trust & Ancient Tree Forum. (2021). Practical Guidance - Ancient and veteran trees: Caring for special trees on farms. <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/50305/ancient-and-veteran-trees-caring-for-special-trees-on-farms.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/i2uh5db5/cd-5-8-b-ancient-woodland-govt-guidance-14-jan-2022.pdf>

B. A buffer zone of greater than 15 metres is important also as tree roots can pose risks primarily related to subsidence in shrinkable clay soils (especially with oak and willow trees), the buffer zone depends on the type of trees, but at least 15m and should be 15m from the edge of the canopy, thus there are going for the minimum: Standard Guidance 1. However, a site-specific functional buffer zone may be needed to be larger to account for the full extent of roots and associated mycorrhizal networks which can extend far beyond the calculation.

REFERENCES:

Woodland Trust & Ancient Tree Forum. (2021). Practical Guidance - Ancient and veteran trees: Caring for special trees on farms.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/50305/ancient-and-veteran-trees-caring-for-special-trees-on-farms.pdf>

7) MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Design:

A. Mix of houses and 'affordability' issue: The developer stated that the community needs new housing and given that the houses already built at Sumners Fields are not selling well, I regard that as a moot point. The proposals state Miller Homes will build 68 houses, of which 12 are affordable, 7 are shared ownership and 44 are private. It was originally stated in the village meeting on 08/08/2025 that they would build 65 houses. The developer stated that 35% of the properties would be affordable, but even allowing for a definition of affordable that includes both 'affordable and shared ownership that equates to 29.7% and not 35%. According to this affordable should mean no more than 80% of the local market value. The population of Barns Green is 1074 (2024 estimate). Rural areas in England require an average of 16.6 'affordable homes' per 1000 households annually, which is nearly 50% higher than urban areas that need 11.1 homes per 1,000 households. This important finding has been revealed in the study by Dr. Michael Bullock et al 'Mind the gap: how rural communities are falling behind on affordable homes' (Rural Housing Solutions) which reveals that more Barns Green is being short changed by the ratios presented (i.e. 12 in the proposal stated as affordable versus 16.6 or higher that is actually needed. This results in the ratios proposed in the development as inadequate. This is an important issue here as the combination of high- priced detached houses and wages generally below urban areas results in a larger affordability gap. This results in younger people within the village being unable to buy their own homes and live near to their families who live in the area. This has been mentioned in almost every village meeting attended by the community on this subject and is a cause for concern among the parents of people who live here. This tendency has been echoed elsewhere.

References:

<https://rsnonline.org.uk/rural-housing-emergency>

https://www.citypopulation.de/en/uk/southeastengland/west_sussex/E63006107__barns_green/

<https://englishruralha.sharepoint.com/sites/ExecutiveTeam/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FExecutiveTeam%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FCommunications%20%26%20Advocacy%2FResearch%20%26%20Projects%2FRural%20Housing%20Solutions%20%28Jo%20Lavis%29%2FMind%20The%20Gap%20%2D%20How%20Rural%20Communities%20Are%20Falling%20Behind%20on%20Affordable%20Homes%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FExecutiveTeam%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FCommunications%20%26%20Advocacy%2FResearch%20%26%20Projects%2FRural%20Housing%20Solutions%20%28Jo%20Lavis%29&p=true&ga=1>

B. Aesthetics:

i) the number and design and look of the houses proposed is out of keeping with the aesthetics of the village, in marked contrast to the designs and variability in the Ashmiles development in Barns Green undertaken previously by Sigma Homes. The height of the houses in the proposed development is also a real issue, being between 7.9-8.4 metres (2.5 storey height) which will make the houses particularly visible from the road as well as from vantage points at the back for walkers of which there are many in Barns Green and many who come to Barns Green for that sole purpose. The average height of a two-storey house in the UK is between 6.1 and 8 metres from ground to ridge of the roof.

REFERENCES:

<https://michaelanthonyestateagents.co.uk/how-tall-is-a-2-storey-house-in-the-uk/>

OBJECTION STATEMENT SUMMARY:

For the reasons set out above in sections 1-7, this proposal fails to meet the requirements of local and national planning policy and would result in clear and demonstrable harm, far outweighing the benefits of the proposed development. The development would place unacceptable pressure on local infrastructure, erode the character of the area, and cause lasting environmental and social impacts that have not been adequately assessed or mitigated. The limited benefits claimed by the applicant do not, in my determination, outweigh these harms. Granting permission in these circumstances would set an unsustainable precedent and undermine the planning objectives intended to protect this community. The application should therefore be refused.

One final point I would like HDC to consider how much time I put into writing this when I could have been doing things with my family and thus the depth of feeling people like myself and others feel about where we live. The community is not opposed to development. We simply ask that proposals respect the neighbourhood plan that we were asked to do and was developed through extensive local consultation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



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Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) www.horsham.gov.uk Chief Executive: Jane E aton