

The East Midland Churches' Forum was established in 1998 at the request of Church Leaders in the Region and in response to an initiative of Churches Together in England (CTE) . Its primary purpose is to provide a supporting reference panel for The Churches' Representative on the East Midland Regional Assembly and liaise with the East Midlands Development Agency and Local Government.

From early invitations to all denominations in fellowship with CTE it has established itself as a representative group of lay and ordained people and sought to work with and monitor the East Midland Development Agency (*emda*), co-operate with, and contribute to other regional institutions and their policy making.

The Forum has limited expertise but brings a depth of knowledge of the region and its people and the well established work of churches and denominational specialists in Social Responsibility, Justice & Peace, Industrial and Rural Ministries. We share commitment to application of Kingdom values for the development of people and the Region and stewardship of its environment.

We seek to draw on experts who share our commitment to faith, and wherever possible to present a common voice with those from other faiths and none whose concerns lead them to the same conclusions for the development of our region.

The Forum meets 3 times each year, mirroring the Assembly cycle and a small steering group meets monthly.

A BASIS FOR OUR ENGAGEMENT - The following page summarises the background to the East Midland Churches' Forum and how it sees its role.

The direction of Central Government Policy within a European Context continues along a devolution agenda. A key paper prepared for the Anglican Bishops in 1999 "Regional Development & Community" is a firm basis from which emerged the Churches' Forum. Our work is now commended to Leaders as a basis for their comments and prayer on policy and governance with regard to this national and regional agenda .

A Key Starting Point for the Forum's Own Work was to establish **A THEOLOGICAL BASIS** for all it does

- This has now been extended with a paper on Subsidiarity
- and will be further expanded by a paper on "Values" addressing the priorities and practice of regional governance

From this starting point we have sought to engage with a rapidly expanding portfolio of Policy development in the EAST MIDLANDS:

Since the **Assembly** and **emda** were first set up in October 1998 they have drafted policies and consulted at an unprecedented pace:

- **IRS** Integrated Regional Strategy - the radical, unifying work of the Assembly which bring together Social, Environmental, Economic and Spatial (planning) Policy
- **RPG** Regional Spatial Strategy (Planning Guidance), the statutory planning framework for the region developed by the Local Government Association and Government Office for the East Midlands (GO-EM). The Draft is currently awaiting the outcome of a 3 week Public Examination in June.
- **EDS** Economic Development Strategy - **emda's** "Prosperity Through People" and its Rural & Urban Action Plans and detailed Delivery Programme
- **SBS** Small Business Service (from April 2001), University for Food, East Midlands Observatory and other initiatives
- **LSC** Regional **Learning & Skills Council** now being formed and its study groups, the Local Learning Partnerships (LLP)

The Regional Assembly has established supporting Task Groups:

- Energy
- Human Resources
- Crime & Safety
- Health

Alongside these, National Government has introduced major new proposals and research on :

- Housing
- Social Inclusion
- Transport
- Sport & Culture

***emda's* Policy implementations is now moving forward**

- Urban Action Plan
- Rural Action Plan
- Sub-Regional (e.g. Coal Fields) Agendas
- Regional Delivery Plan
- Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)

The Churches' Forum has sought to contribute to all.

We engage with this Agenda through our membership of the assembly, participating in Task Groups, regular liaison with *emda* and the Local Government Association.

We respond on behalf of the Churches to national and regional consultation papers discussing our drafts at full Forum meetings.

In this Second Annual Report to our constituent churches and their Leaders we hope to establish a format for wider communication which will ensure our work is increasingly open to the scrutiny of our fellow Christians.

We aim to inform and stimulate, on the basis of our work, and the questions we have attempted to address in Christ's Name over the past year.

We aim to encourage as many as are able to engage with these non-party political processes which are shaping our society in an increasingly devolved English, United Kingdom and European context and a rapidly changing world.

We aim also to invite you to challenge us to work more effectively within this contemporary calling and to concentrate on those matters which will best serve our society and harness its vision for sustainability development, economic progress, social inclusivity, reducing or positive environmental impact, and spatial cohesion.

Furthermore we seek your help, through the opportunities you have to speak and influence, encourage and initiate. Particular requests for assistance and prayer are marked in the following pages.

Together we try to ensure our secular society maintains contact with those cultural and spiritual axioms which will enable all the people of this region to find A MORE EXCELLENT WAY

From the Bishop of Sherwood Chair of the East Midlands Churches Forum

Churches in the East Midlands have a major opportunity to engage in significant political and social changes taking place throughout our Nation. Regional Government is on the agenda. There is a Scottish Executive, a Welsh Assembly, and English Regional Assemblies. In the East Midlands we have a well established East Midlands Development Agency and Regional Assembly. The East Midlands' Churches' Forum is engaging with these rapid changes. We have established our theological frame-work, in order to respond to various consultation documents. In these responses our Christian credibility has been established.

To make this credibility more effective, we need:

- to draw on the skills of people who can contribute to the regional agenda
- to involve Churches in hearing the questions and offering their thoughts
- to continue offering to the Development Agency high quality submissions

We are looking to Church Leaders to assist us in:

- raising awareness of these important regional developments
- identifying people who can take this vision forward

For the first time we are seeking to make a co-ordinated regional, ecumenical response to a major political agenda.

The Background to REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND:

Following close on the heels of devolution in Scotland and Wales the forerunners of Government for 12 English Regions have been set up:

- Regional Assemblies or Chambers with Local Authority appointed Members and other “Partners” appointed by Business, Voluntary Sector, Other Faiths and Christian Churches
- Regional Development Agencies charged with Economic Planning and Regeneration of the regions
- Government Offices in each Region carrying out the Regional Application of Government Policies on Planning,
- Transport and Environment (or Spatial Development), Trade & Industrial Matters, and Home Affairs
- Partnership Networks of major public bodies including Local Authorities, Health Authorities, Police, Education, Business, Environment, Voluntary Sector, Cultural and Faith Bodies
- and the new Learning & Skills Councils and Small Business Services

Each Group and several cross-sector Task Groups have been charged with developing appropriate policies and, in many cases beginning to manage large amounts of public funding within their regions.

A primary objective is to integrate those policies into an Integrated Regional Strategy, to be adopted by our Regional Assembly - a VISION and ROUTE MAP for our Region as it emerges into an era of Britain in Europe and a world that sees itself shrinking and turning ever faster.

Theological Principles

While engaging with the Regionalisation Process it was felt by the Steering Group that we had to be clear on the Theological Principles to which we were working. We also needed to be clear how these principles could be translated into action, and be a basis for judging the outcomes of both emda and the Assembly's work.

By basing our work on the Five Marks of Mission we were clearly stating that what we were doing was a central part of the mission of the whole Church.

- Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- Teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- Respond to human need by loving service
- Transform unjust structures of society
- Safeguard the integrity of creation, sustain and renew the life of the earth

The vision of Isaiah 65 formed the core of our judgement,

- Those who plant vineyards shall eat of their fruit
- Those who build houses shall live in them
- The Old shall grow old with dignity
- Children shall not die young - nor their hope

The Principles have been widely circulated and have received some acclaim from our partners within the Region. After the meeting of Church **Leaders** at Edward King House in 1999 and the Assembly Secretary were regularly chasing Steering Group members for a final publication copy.

We then recognised that true Subsidiarity should form the basis of real participation.

Subsidiarity

.. referred to in the Treaty of Amsterdam as a principle to be followed in development of 'ever closer union' to which EU member states are committed.

Subsidiarity has never been legally defined but it implies political decisions should be taken by the level of government closest to the community concerned.

The churches have a principled understanding of subsidiarity from both Catholic and Protestant perspectives including Papal Encyclicals since 1891, endorsement by the current Archbishop of Canterbury and from C17 Calvinist theologians.

The whole Christian church teaches:

- dignity of the person; created in the image of God, which social and economic order exists to nurture and serve
- the common good; no simple utilitarianism, but all the aspects of social living which allow perfection of our humanity'
- solidarity; "How will X impact onany individual or group?"
- the good of the poor/marginalised is vital to the common good.

Subsidiarity extrapolates these to:

- attribute sovereignty to the federally organised body of people, in an ascending order of autonomous, connected communities.
- see injustice in groups/higher taking from individuals/lower what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry
- defend associations and individuals from totalitarianism, small business from predatorial corporations, and communities at every level from higher national or supranational organisations.

Eco-political systems should sustain 'civil society' not destroy or absorb it. Intervention is only justified when the capacity of individuals or private groups acting independently is exceeded.

As the EU and its legislative scope has grown subsidiarity has become more significant. There are now fewer legislative proposals and real effort to solve problems by other means e.g. New car emission standards negotiated with manufacturers; benchmarking, peer review, shared good practice. There is greater sensitivity to differing national or regional priorities in policy-making.

The issue for the Forum is regionalism. The Committee of the Regions, (dominated by the German Lander and others with greater power in their own national constitutions) is their voice in Brussels. Further structural devolution is expected over time. This would disadvantage English regions, with no constitutional existence at this stage, and like the East Midlands, little sense of cohesion or history of co-operation.

Annual Report of the Churches' Assembly Member Canon Keith Orford

The Regional Assembly held its first annual meeting in December and is now in the second year of its activity. I and Raj Bali, representing other Faith Communities, have attended all of the quarterly meetings supported by at least one member of the Churches' Forum as an observer.

It does appear that the working arrangements between the Assembly, the local authorities, the Government Regional Office and the Development Agency have been going well.

Whereas the Assembly initially focused on the Economic Strategy during its first year, the Agenda has moved on. In the first place to Regional Planning Guidance. This is a statutory framework that sets out the criteria for future planning to which all local development plans must relate. Which activities can take place where – housing and transport have been key issues, together with the relationship between urban and rural priorities.

The Assembly itself is pursuing a vision for the Region through Integrated Regional Strategy, pioneering the linking of policies and their implementation across the boundaries of a wide range of agencies. Too often in the past actions by one area have contradicted those of another.

The four themes of the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) are

- Social Inclusion
- The Environment
- The Economy
- Spatial Issues

Objectives and Targets are being drawn up for each of these. Social Inclusion and Environment are the two areas being addressed directly by the Assembly.

The Churches' membership of the Assembly has enabled us to participate in Key Task Groups where the detailed work is undertaken; transport, social inclusion and housing. The process is one of producing Viewpoint documents setting out the present position and then developing strategies in each of the key areas.

Key amongst the objectives is the development of better life long learning opportunities, to enhance ICT and skills generally, to encourage a better contribution of arts and sport, and to develop social capital.

Additional IRS Task Groups are being set up to cover Energy, Crime and Safety, Health and Human Resources.

The Assembly has also initiated the first review of its activity and the Forum has produced its own overview.

The Churches' role has been undoubtedly one of importance, bringing to the table our grass roots knowledge coupled with theological understanding. Our voice has challenged some of the assumptions and given support where it is appropriate. We have constantly reminded all concerned of the need for 'spiritual' values and not to be utterly reliant on money based criteria. Much is said about improving the 'Quality of Life' and about developing 'communities' but all too little is said about what values should underlie such notions.

Cultural Agenda

The Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sports established a Forum in each Region to champion this spectrum including tourism, create a common vision, and identify strategic priorities. Chaired by Nottingham Playhouse Director, Vanu Dhapu, the EM Forum draws on the arts, museums, heritage and sporting bodies and invited representation from the Voluntary Sector. They were surprised to receive (and subsequently rejected) an approach from the Churches' Forum and could not understand the interest of Churches in Culture!

The EMCF responded by establishing its own Cultural Task Group in the firm belief that the Churches are important contributors to Cultural debate:

- culture or cultural vision are not created but emerge from within communities
- churches are at the heart of many communities with contact from the youngest to the oldest
- churches guard some of the oldest and most revered symbols of heritage and common culture including buildings, fine art, writings, music, burial & archaeological sites
- culture is "social memory" - our mind is in touch with the most complete record
- churches' tourism is of huge significance regionally and internationally
- we speak on behalf of a unique Source of inspiration!

Leaders are urged to work through their contacts, ordained and lay, to press for a unified Christian Voice within this area of policy making.

In 10 years' time the East Midlands will be identified as the leading region for culture. Its diversity will be the feature that identifies and shapes the region"
The East Midlands Cultural Consortium will shout about culture. It will inspire respect for cultural expression and activity, and support partnerships and actions that realise the power of culture to link lives, open doors and benefit our diverse communities. Vanu Dhapu, Chair for EMCC

Looking ahead

There has been a feeling that the Government may have lost its enthusiasm for Regionalisation in England, whilst that might be true in respect of elected Assemblies it is not necessarily the case in other regards. The Government has already promoted proposals to strengthen the work of the Government Regional Offices and this has been endorsed by the House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Transport and the Regions. Elsewhere it has been argued that the lack of emphasis on English Regions could make them poor partners in Europe compared to Scotland and Wales. The issue is very much alive but there is a danger that it could become embroiled in the debate about all things European.

The future work of the Assembly will be found in the IRS. It is no easy task to break down institutional barriers, nor is it easy to think in Regional terms mainly because we are not accustomed to doing so. The other key issue is the ability to focus on sub-regional areas; five of these have been developed in the Region.

Partnership is at the heart of the process; we see that in the Partnership members of the Assembly but also in the sub regional Partnerships. It remains to be seen whether new Partnerships will be set up to develop sub-regional strategies or whether the remit and geography of existing Partnerships will be extended. The Churches engage with only some of the existing economic Partnerships; but are being encouraged to participate in all. Partnership is also a key feature of Local Government modernisation, which introduces cabinet style management and the abolition of the traditional committee structures in councils. Local Community Partnerships are to be essential players and there is a challenge as to whether local churches see themselves as part of the community process.

For the Churches' Forum there is a wider issue. Regional initiatives are set within wider national policy development. We have scarce and stretched resources and there is a need for us to co-ordinate and share the responses of Churches to consultation. We see scope to pool our efforts for the benefit of all.

Cultural Agenda - The cultural aspects of regional policy have been given by the Government to a separate Cultural Consortium. The churches have not been invited to engage with this agenda as yet. However the Forum has set up its own cultural task group.

Health - We have also established a health task group working with Lynn Crookes whom the Regional Health Authority has appointed as a Health Liaison Worker based at the EMDA offices

Education and skills - The new Learning & Skills Councils will be set up on a county basis and there are several issues to be clarified regarding links into education and learning.

Keith Orford - July 2000

Rural Action Plan

Diversity in the scale, accessibility and service levels of Rural Communities requires flexibility not least in the fields of Learning Skills, Enterprise and Innovation.

Local “capacity building” ensures sensitivity to local situations as well as an improved pathway for funding. Bidding processes should ALWAYS be underpinned by grass-roots consultation and more Development Workers are required.

Commitment to projects for the medium term is essential if waste and disillusionment are to be avoided.

Hard lines on funding maps need to be blurred.

Some urban models for community help like CAB’s work anywhere, others like FE provision are more difficult. IT opens up possibilities but isolation is not a “virtual” reality!

Current threats to agriculture are very real and new opportunities must be found for co-operation between (not consolidation of) family farms, the bed-rock of many rural communities.

Tourism is important but no panacea. While valuable it involves many low paid jobs and can inflict real damage on rural environments and lifestyles.

Church Tourism is very significant with 50 million visitors to churches annually. Newer “Green” tourism needs support.

Transport including railways are vital and more work is required to assist rural communities.

Market Towns need both more research, more consideration and more cash, with Planning for Real and Local Design Statements to ensure local empowerment.

The churches’ voice is an element of social infrastructure most consistently present in every community and should not be ignored.

Leaders should seek to facilitate its involvement as servant of the community.

Urban Action Plan

One of the tasks that emda have been charged with is to encourage sustainable communities. The reason for this is that it is perceived that economic success cannot happen unless communities are enabled to develop as well. Continuing deprivation cannot co-exist with spiralling wealth. In order to work towards sustainable communities emda published a draft Urban Action Plan in June.

On behalf of EMCF, members of the Steering Group drew together a response to this document. In the response much of what emda proposed was welcomed, however a few alterations were suggested. As the Rural Officers in the Region had already made a response to the Rural Action Plan, their response was incorporated into the Urban response, thus ensuring continuity of our comments to emda.

Single Regeneration Budgets

A key task emda has is to distribute Single Regeneration Budget money.

SRB6 was announced in December 1999, and was targeted at the 5 most deprived areas of the Region, with 80% of the money being directed to the 4 Cities and the Former Coal-field communities of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

Due to a variety of delays the application period was very tight, with emda trying to respond on the date originally highlighted, prior to the delays. When the announcement was made of projects that were being developed for final submission, Lincoln was not encouraged to proceed despite being identified as within the area of the 80% grant.

Members of EMCF steering Group realised that this would cause problems for the future regeneration of Lincoln and mounted a campaign on two fronts requesting emda rethink their original decision:

- that there was injustice, with preference for the Golden Triangle
- highlighting fatal flaws within the SRB Bidding Process.

In the early part of the summer of 2000 members of the Steering Group entered into conversations with emda seeking ways to improve this process, ensuring the equity of distribution, and moving access to SRB money from a “beauty contest” to a strategic process.

PROSPERITY FOR PEOPLE

A Summary of the East Midlands Churches Forum Response to the East Midland Development Agency’s Draft Economic Strategy, September 1999

The formation of EMDA and the Regional Assembly provides unprecedented opportunities to focus on our region - to celebrate its strengths, to work on its weaknesses. Within European and Global economic environments a sense of identity and purpose will be strong assets in making our way successfully and we are pleased to see the Regional Strategies being brought together. The EMCF shares this commitment to partnership and welcomes commitment to targets.

We are however concerned about ‘the winner takes all’ implications in the document “Prosperity Through People”, aiming to be in the top 20 European regions, a choice to compete head on instead of emphasising unique strengths, and diversity. The Top 20 are mostly capital cities, exceptional centres, volatile, and superheated. Would ‘stable levels of economic growth’ be more equitable, do justice to the kind of economy the East Midlands possesses, and be more realistic?

The strategy equates GDP wealth with a better quality of life and we looked for other measures, not least **our ability to share wealth.**

We would prefer greater emphasis on people “PROSPERITY FOR THE PEOPLE, PROSPERITY THROUGH THE PEOPLE -a region rewarding to live in for all - where people can feel economically, socially, culturally and spiritually fulfilled. A region in which there is enough good work for all”.

A just, participative and sustainable society is integral to the Christian view. A society without a vision that is wider than economic success will not survive Stewardship underpins sustainability and implies limits to growth, reduced dependency on scarce resources. The Economic Observatory should aim to understand how our robust if not world beating economy actually works.

Leaders are asked to:

- **challenge** overemphasis on “big ideas”, M1 and East Midland Air-port development which do not demonstrate benefits to a wider community, and other profit before people tendencies, consuming green fields and other resources.
- **promote** opportunities for grass-roots and community based, diverse enterprise and initiative. Inclusive elements which raise the contribution of the many and reduce social dependency costs are good economics! Learn from the poor.
- **seek** openness about hard choices in grant & regeneration funds - seek the VALUES of hunger for learning, creativity, community, & stewardship.
- **support** integration, East to West, and North sea linkages, not just North South and arterial gravy-trains which bypass rural areas and Market Towns
- **speak** of EXCELLENCE rather than COMPETITIVENESS **celebrate** success of the SPECIAL rather than victory of the WINNER
- **affirm** things which relate to the long-term, sustainable, well rooted and regenerate, rather than the latest, most fashionable, and frothy
- **require** signs of improved wealth distribution from the new EM Economic Observatory and monitor pressure on (Ex-) Coal Fields and Agricultural areas
- **report** the economic progress of COMMUNITIES rather than COMPANIES

East Midlands Regional Assembly Housing Task Group

This Sub group of the Assembly is a first in the UK. Members include local authorities, housing associations, house builders and funders. It aims to:

- raise the profile of housing and issues that impact on it
- respond to national and local consultations
- influence government.

The group has set up a wider Reference Group to consult with, and to get ideas from, all in housing and related fields.

Issues discussed

- ❑ *Integrated Regional Strategy:* Developed by East Midlands Regional Assembly to ensure economic, environment, social, and planning guidance strategies work together. Housing cuts across all four major strategies.
- ❑ *Regional Planning Guidance:* Submissions have been made on the number of new homes needed.
- ❑ *Response to Housing Green Paper:* Response to government consultation on proposals which include transfer of council housing, harmonising council and housing association rents, extending legal homelessness safety net to care leavers, 16 and 17 year olds and those leaving institutions, and some housing benefit reform.
- ❑ *Health and housing* The group has looked at how these two policy areas affect each other.

Leaders are asked to promote

- Homelessness Sunday - marking 28 January 2001 in churches
- Prayer for homeless people and projects such as Padley Day Centre, Soup Runs
- Support these projects, hostels and others with gifts

The East Midland Churches' Forum meets three times a year mirroring the cycle of the Regional Assembly. It has met in each of the 5 major counties.

Initially Church Leaders were invited to attend along with their nominated representatives, and specialists. This invitation is now open to all Christians who are actively involved in church or social leadership or have a particular area of relevant expertise.

The Steering Group takes on the task, between Forums, of co-ordinating responses, identifying people who can assist in preparation of authoritative work reflecting our common faith, and participate directly in the increasing number of task groups associated with the new East Midland bodies.

The Forum and Steering group is chaired by Rt. Rev Alan Morgan, Bishop of Sherwood (bishop@bishopsherwood.prestel.co.uk) . Other members of the Steering group are currently:

Rev Malcolm HANSON (URC) - Vice Chair	MGHanson@btinternet.com
Rev Terry MILLER (Anglican)	T.E.Miller@tesco.net
Cannon Keith ORFORD (Assembly Member)	keith.orford@btinternet.com
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Rev Andrew VAUGHAN	Vaughanlim@tesco.net
Rev Martin WILSON	martin@ldbmsr.leicester.anglican.org
Derek MARKIE (Baptist)	derek.markie@telinco.co.uk
Pauline NICHOLS (Secretary)	emcf@tesco.net

Significant contributions have been made to the work by Patricia Stoaat (Anglican), Jackie Carpenter (Churches Housing), and Rachael Elliott.

Most recently Canon Alan Nugent (diocese of Lincoln) hopes to develop lines of co-operation with the learning and skills projects, recognising that the churches agenda is rather different to the secular. A small group of advisors from the Industrial Mission, the Youth Service and FEHE made formal representation to the Government's White paper "Learning to succeed, a new framework for post 16 learning".

Known Christians who occupy places on the Assembly - Mr Mike Marchment and Cllr Eric Lancashire also and support our work.

DRAFT REGIONAL PLANNING

East Midlands Churches Forum Response to the Spatial Strategy, February to June 2000

Adopting the spirit of its brief as Department for Environment Transport and the Regions, this Ministry confirmed that each Region should issue its own Planning Guidance as a major plank in the establishment of regional identity and devolution.

National Planning Guidance has been expanded to include Transport matters but also the newer Policy Guidelines (PPG's) give greater discretion to each region. Regional Plans, the subordinate County Structure Plans and Local Plans provide the basis for both reactive decision to permit specific developments and proactive promotion of major developments, regeneration, transport linkages and housing provision.

The 3 year process of drafting, consulting upon and confirming the EM Regional Planning Guidance to 2020 (RPG) is now half-way through. The Churches' Forum has commented on the draft prepared by the Local Government Association (EMRLGA) and contributed to debates at the 3 week public hearing in June. The task of finalising the Guidance now transfers to GO-EM.

Our primary concerns have been to:

- promote justice, especially between developers, public authorities, landowners and end -users of homes, business premises (including employees) and public facilities
- encourage greater interdependence and understanding between empowered communities, diverse rural and urban environments
- promote aesthetic excellence and safe, sustainable environments through radical rather than "politically correct" policy
- with our representative on Housing Task Group and sympathetic interests, to establish a good supply of affordable, culturally sensitive, accessible housing for all

Leaders could:

- press for adequate numbers of affordable houses, local housing for local need
- require that planning policy be applied and monitored at every level
- encourage communities to engage in an informed way with the planning processes as a route to considerable local empowerment
- request local authorities to facilitate and fund the above as part of "Best Value" democracy

FORUM FOR 2000-2001

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Sources of Information:

- EM Assembly <http://www.eastmidlandsassembly.org.uk>
- EM Development Agency (emda) <http://www.emda.org.uk/mainpage.htm>
- Govt Office of the EM (GO-EM) <http://www.go-em.gov.uk>
- EM Local Govt Assoc (EMRLGA) <http://www.emrlga.gov.uk>
- EM Observatory <http://www.eastmidlandsobservatory.org.uk>
- Statistics <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/stats/ukinfigs/regstats.htm>
- European stats <http://www.europa.eu.int/index-en.htm>
- Social Exclusion Unit <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/seu>
- an East Midlands News source <http://search.eastmidlands.net/>
- Environmental research
(Friends of the Earth) <http://www.foe.co.uk/midland/emnews.htm>
- East Midlands Business <http://www.emnet.co.uk/>