

# Government drops Rugby airport plans



**Success:** Cllr June Tandy (left), Deputy Leader of WCC and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning, celebrating the decision with other protestors including Conservative Leader Cllr Gordon Collett (right), Chairman of the Anti Rugby Airport Committee, Liberal Democrat Leader Cllr Jerry Roodhouse (third from right) and Laurie Wright, Mayor of Rugby (front row, fourth from left.)

**WARWICKSHIRE**  
County Council  
leaders were  
delighted  
with the  
Government's decision to drop  
controversial plans to develop  
a new four-runway airport near  
Rugby to replace Birmingham  
International Airport.

Alistair Darling, the Transport Secretary, announced the decision in the Commons last month, telling MPs: "The Government does not support the option of a new airport between Coventry and Rugby."

This follows an 18-month campaign by Warwickshire County Councillors, MPs, MEPs and other campaigners.

Among other things, the vigorous campaigning to have the Rugby option ruled out included a submission to the Transport Select Committee on the Aviation White Paper, visits to Westminster and letters to Mr Darling and other key Cabinet Members.

## Campaign

The core argument of the campaign was that the economy of the Midlands would be better served by sensitive development of Birmingham International Airport (BIA) than by building the new airport in Warwickshire.

Celebrating the decision, Councillor June Tandy, Deputy Leader of Warwickshire County Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning, said: "The White Paper said that there was overwhelming opposition to the Rugby proposal. This shows the strength of public

feeling and the power of a united campaign by the public and politicians throughout the Midlands."

Councillor Gordon Collett, Leader of the Conservative group and Chairman of the Anti Rugby Airport Committee, agreed, saying: "The power of the people overcame every obstacle – ensuring the Government got the message that the proposal wasn't relevant for this area. The Government was forced to listen to the overwhelming objection. The door has now been closed on any prospect for Rugby Airport."

Leader of the Liberal Democrat group, Councillor Jerry Roodhouse, offered his congratulations to the campaigners for their efforts. "I congratulate the communities and people who ran a good strong campaign. It shows how all political parties, across the political divide, can stand up and be heard."