

6 February 2023

CPRE SUSSEX PRESS STATEMENT/BRIEFING NOTE

## **WAKE-UP SUSSEX!!! HAVE YOUR SAY IN PIVOTAL CONSULTATION. DEVELOPERS WILL AND SO SHOULD YOU**

**Changes to national planning policy are imminent that will have far-reaching consequences for the future of Sussex and its communities and natural environment, are now the subject of an open consultation.**

This pivotal consultation: 'Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy', was launched by the Government without publicity on 22 December 2022, closing 2 March 2023 at 11.45pm. The Government will respond to the consultation by Spring 2023, publishing the NPPF revisions 'as part of this', so that 'policy changes can take effect as soon as possible'.

Details of the 'reforms', and how to respond to the consultation are presented and explained in the consultation prospectus, accessible together with the related 'tracked changes NPPF', which sets out the 'proposed policy wording that is indicative of what would be implemented immediately, subject to the results of this consultation', at

[Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy)  
([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

Note that the prospectus states at Chapter 4 Planning for Housing: Introducing new flexibilities to meeting housing needs: paragraph 8 Using an alternative method:

'Local authorities will be expected to continue to use local housing need, assessed through the standard method, to inform the preparation of their plans; although the ability to use an alternative approach where there are exceptional circumstances that can be justified will be retained'.

'We will, though, make clearer in the Framework that the outcome of the standard method is an advisory starting-point to inform plan-making – a guide that is not mandatory – and also propose to give more explicit indications in planning guidance of the types of local characteristics which may justify the use of an alternative method, such as islands with a high percentage of elderly residents, or university towns with an above average proportion of students'. And that

**'We would welcome views on the sort of demographic and geographic factors which could be used to demonstrate these exceptional circumstances in practice'** - circumstances that would justify NOT using the Standard Method.

**CPRE Sussex says:**

“Usage of the Standard Method has resulted in the imposition across Sussex of excessive and unsustainable housing targets without regard to the damaging consequences for communities and the environment.

“This consultation offers a hugely important one-off opportunity for Councils and communities to justify an alternative approach in place of the Standard Method, in order to achieve sustainable housebuilding targets”.

“After all, Secretary of State Michael Gove said in his Ministerial Statement, 6 December 2022, that it will be up to local authorities working with their communities, to determine how many homes can actually be built, taking into account what should be protected in each area”.

Professor Dan Osborn, Chair CPRE Sussex, and Trustees Dr John Kay and Dr Roger Smith.

[www.cpresussex.org.uk](http://www.cpresussex.org.uk)