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PRESS RELEASE: CPRE Sussex launches sewage infrastructure campaign

Charity says councils must make adequate sewerage infrastructure a prerequisite to development – no sewer upgrade, no permission to develop or occupy new homes.

A Sussex charity has launched a campaign in a bid to tackle the unacceptable flooding of sewage into waterways, homes and gardens.

CPRE Sussex wants local councils to make more use of ‘pre-commencement’ or ‘Grampian’ conditions.

These conditions form part of planning permissions, preventing development from taking place until specific conditions have been undertaken.

They could include reinforcing the sewerage network, extending treatment capacity at a sewage works, improving surface water drainage and reducing storm sewage overflows to environmental waters.

While the primary aim is to make sure the necessary infrastructure is built, this approach is likely to also reduce speculative development.

CPRE Sussex director Paul Steedman said: “The environmental objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are too often being over-ridden by Planning Inspectors at appeal. The presumption that development proposals should be considered sustainable has resulted in many speculative development proposals that clearly seek to bypass local planning controls and flagrantly disregard the natural environment.

“We want to see councils make use of Grampian conditions, putting planning controls back into the hands of the local and neighbourhood planning authorities.”

The use of Grampian conditions emanates from the decision in Grampian Regional Council v City of Aberdeen (1984) which in essence provides that the requirements of a condition can preclude the implementation of development.

At a 2023 seminar attended by 45 representatives from 25 local councils in Sussex there was strong support for the introduction of Grampian conditions in the planning process to address sewerage deficiencies.

Find out more about the campaign and Grampian conditions at cpresussex.org.uk/news/sewage-new-infrastructure-is-needed-before-developments-are-built

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Notes for editors:**About CPRE Sussex**

CPRE Sussex is shaping a greener future for Sussex. Our priorities are:

- Beautiful landscapes, rich in nature and greener towns and cities
- Countryside and green spaces which are accessible to all, enriching lives and health
- Sustainable development for thriving communities
- Effective responses to the climate emergency

We engage with decision makers, influencing them and challenging them to protect the Sussex countryside and green spaces. We inform on environmental issues and empower individuals and communities with robust evidence to defend and enhance the green spaces they love. We believe in collaborating with others to ensure a greener future for our county. We research and provide advice on planning issues. Together we can shape a greener future for Sussex.