

5 November 2024

PRESS RELEASE: ONS data reveals lack of affordable housing in Sussex

- ***Charity calls for more genuinely affordable rented housing***
- ***Hastings is the only “affordable” area for rent in Sussex***
- ***Brighton & Hove is one of the worst in the country***

A charity has called for more ambitious affordable housing targets after data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) revealed Hastings is the only “affordable” area for private rent in Sussex.

CPRE Sussex says the figures, which also reveal Brighton & Hove is one of the least affordable areas in the country, highlight the importance of new affordable rented housing – and homes available for social rent.

The ONS deem an area “affordable” if a private-renting household would spend the equivalent of 30% or less of their gross income on rent for new or existing tenancies.

In Brighton & Hove, households spend an average of 44.7% of their gross income on rent. At the other end of the scale, households in Hastings spend an average of 28.3% of their gross income.

CPRE Sussex director Paul Steedman said: “We need local authorities to require developers to provide a higher proportion of affordable housing, even as we resist the Government’s undeliverable overall housing numbers. Within the constraints they face, authorities should also be ambitious about building their own new council housing or buying existing stock for social rent.

“The type of housing we build matters. The Government needs to turn its focus from quantity to quality, with a real focus on high quality homes for social rent – not simply setting ever-bigger housing targets. We need the Government to be more ambitious on its definitions for affordable housing, more ambitious in its aspirations for social housing and to look at other policies which can help tackle rental affordability, many of which will not relate to planning. The allocation of sites for such housing should be plan-led with neighbourhood plans leading the way.”

CPRE Sussex believes well-planned affordable housing is critical to keep villages and towns thriving and our countryside working. The charity says affordable rents should be tied to average local incomes.

Across Sussex, the average spend of gross income on rent is as follows:

- Adur, 34.3%
- Arun, 30.2%

- Brighton and Hove, 44.7%
- Chichester, 33.7%
- Crawley, 32.7%
- Eastbourne, 32.6%
- Hastings, 28.3%
- Horsham, 31.6%
- Lewes, 35.1%
- Mid Sussex, 30.2%
- Rother, 33.0%
- Wealden, 33.3%
- Worthing, 33.1%

Find out more about CPRE Sussex's work on affordable housing, and how you can get involved, here: cpresussex.org.uk/homes-people-can-afford

-ENDS-

For press inquiries and interview opportunities call Sheena Campbell on 07709 354924.

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.