



The countryside charity  
Sussex

**24 September 2025**

**More than 26,000 new homes could be built on brownfield land in Sussex, CPRE research reveals**

New research from CPRE, the countryside charity, reveals that there are brownfield sites with space for over 26,000 new homes in Sussex – and that around 50% of these homes already have full or outline planning permission meaning that they could be built rapidly.

The research additionally shows that there are enough brownfield sites across England to build 1.4 million new homes, indicating that the government can move towards its UK-wide target of 1.5 million new homes more quickly with limited building on undeveloped greenfield land.

The figures for Sussex's Local Planning Authorities are:

Adur - enough brownfield for at least 2548 homes

Arun - 1291

Brighton & Hove - 8600

Chichester - 664

Crawley - 474

Eastbourne - 2419

Hastings - 1806

Horsham - 1558

Lewes - 1666

Mid Sussex - 1488

Rother - 876

Wealden - 564

Worthing - 2325

TOTAL - 26279

*Plus South Downs National Park (also including the part in Hampshire) - 1496*

The UK's huge supply of brownfield land should be the first port of call for building the homes this country desperately needs. These sites are typically located near existing infrastructure, such as public transport, schools, and healthcare facilities, making them advantageous for development.

Prioritising brownfield sites would allow for quicker timelines compared to greenfield developments, aiding the government in its target of delivering 1.5 million new homes by 2030. A 'brownfield-first' approach would not only meet urgent housing demand more quickly but also minimise the environmental impact associated with urban sprawl and undeveloped countryside.



The new research gathered data from Local Authority brownfield registers up to 2024, using the most recent years for which figures are available. The number of brownfield sites registered as suitable for development increased by 16% over the time period. Brownfield land is a constantly renewing resource, and more sites are coming forward all the time, as more land in town centres becomes available and opportunities arise to rebuild low-density housing estates at higher densities.

Despite official policy prioritising brownfield development, 46% of housing development in 2021/22 were completed on greenfield land. According to figures from the Local Government Association (LGA) in 2021, there are likely to be an additional 500,000 planning permissions for development on greenfield sites. Building on greenfield land, rather than repurposing brownfield sites, contributes to the degradation of our already nature-depleted landscapes and threatens the ecosystems that play a crucial role in combating climate change.

The revitalisation of these brownfield areas can lead to the regeneration of communities, fostering social and economic growth. By transforming neglected spaces into vibrant housing developments, a brownfield-first policy can attract new residents and businesses to urban areas.

A brownfield-first approach should be complemented by sustainable urban extensions and the development of new towns where appropriate. These extensions should incorporate essential elements such as green spaces, renewable energy solutions, and smart infrastructure, ensuring that future communities are not only functional but also environmentally sustainable and resilient.

**CPRE is calling on the government to:**

- Enforce their brownfield-first policy for new housing, including by focusing Homes England investment on brownfield sites and rejecting speculative greenfield development.
- Regularly update their brownfield registers to ensure land can be redeveloped.
- Set ambitious and enforceable targets for both affordable and social homes on shovel-ready brownfield sites.

**CPRE Sussex Director Paul Steedman said:** 'The government has pledged a brownfield-first approach to new housing, but the reality is more unnecessary development on green fields – just look at upcoming proposals near Uckfield, Ifield and Cuckfield. A new approach to local housing numbers has massively increased the target in many rural areas without any evidence of local need and without the infrastructure to support new communities. We know that large developers favour building on our countryside, while the number of brownfield sites continues to grow. More identikit, car-dependent executive homes needlessly built on our countryside.'



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We need targets for brownfield sites, up-to-date brownfield registers, and we need investment in genuinely affordable and social homes on that brownfield land – we need the government to support local authorities to get building and commissioning homes themselves, rather than just forcing councils to grant planning permissions to a handful of big developers. If we want homes that tackle the housing crisis, revitalise our towns and cities, and create vibrant, sustainable communities close to existing infrastructure, then homes for social rent on these unused brownfield sites have to be the place we start.'

The full data can be accessed [here](#).

**ENDS**

**For further information or to interview a spokesperson, please contact** Nancy Duckels at [nancy.duckels@cpresussex.org.uk](mailto:nancy.duckels@cpresussex.org.uk)

#### **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.