

100  
YEARS



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England  
Sussex

**10 August 2026**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: CPRE Sussex calls for central government to make water companies statutory consultees on Local Plans, given both high housing targets and worsening environmental conditions in Sussex.**

***The call comes after the government rejected the call in the Lord Committee's drought report for water companies to be statutory consultees on all major planning works.***

CPRE Sussex argues that water companies should be required to take part in public examinations of local plans and have their role and responsibilities openly scrutinised.

Sussex councils have seen a significant increase in housing allocations within their Local Plans, with thousands of new homes required to be delivered over the coming years at an unprecedented scale.

Housing and climate pressures in Sussex are becoming increasingly dire. This summer, the temperature and drought conditions are extreme.

**CPRE Sussex Lead Planning Volunteer, Dr Roger Smith, said:** "Central Government and planning authorities presume that no matter how large the housing target, safe drinking water will always be provided because water companies are required by regulation to supply water – and that in consequence there is no need for these companies to be represented and subject to scrutiny at the examination-in-public of local plans.

"With high temperatures and increasingly long periods of drought being forecast to be the norm, the presumption that potable water can always be provided is foolish and untenable. If demand were to exceed supply, water outages and rationing would become the norm, with devastating consequences for future generations."

The Lord's Committee has warned that England is at risk of 'sleepwalking into serious water scarcity' if the government does not take measures against drought threat.

[Read more on the Lords report decision and the history of water companies as statutory consultees in planning, here.](#)

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For press inquiries and interview opportunities call Nancy Duckels on 07795 551852.

**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.