

# Neighbourhood Plans – Indicative Housing Figures

## Guidance Note

January 2025



# **1. Changes to national planning policy**

1.1 The Government released an updated version of the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) \(Dec 2024\) on 12 December 2024](#). A significant implication of the revised NPPF is that it has made it mandatory for East Hampshire to plan for an identified housing need of 1,142 homes a year. The previous district-wide housing need was 575 homes a year. The housing need is determined by use of the standard method, contained in the updated [planning practice guidance \(PPG\) \(Dec 2024\) on housing and economic needs assessment](#).

1.2 A total of 57% of the East Hampshire district falls within the South Downs National Park (SDNP). However, the NPPF protects the SDNP for its landscape value and consequentially the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) is not expected to meet its housing need. The [emerging SDNPA local plan review \(2025\)](#) is proposing to allocate some development within the East Hampshire district, but it is minimal (60-70 homes a year). As a result, East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) will need to consider how the remaining housing needs can be met through its local plan.

1.3 When local planning authorities cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing, then the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies when determining applications. However, in line with the NPPF, where the presumption in favour applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:

- a. the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and
- b. the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement.

1.4 As a result of the above, there remains an incentive within the NPPF for parish and town councils to produce new or reviewed neighbourhood plans that include allocations to meet its identified housing requirement.

1.5 In relation to neighbourhood plans and associated housing requirements, the following paragraphs of the NPPF (Dec 2024) are of most relevance, particularly for parishes considering allocating development sites as part of the neighbourhood plan process.

Para.69, NPPF (Dec 2024)

*“Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. The requirement may be higher than the identified housing need if, for example, it includes provision for neighbouring areas, or reflects growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations<sup>32</sup>. Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need re-testing at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.”*

Para.70, NPPF (Dec 2024)

*“Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area<sup>33</sup>, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.”*

## **2. Neighbourhood plans and housing numbers**

2.1 In accordance with the NPPF, when producing local plans, local planning authorities should set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas that reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Following the publication of the new NPPF in December 2024 and the introduction of a new standard method, the local housing need within East Hampshire has increased significantly. As a result, more work is needed on the emerging local plan to determine the overall housing requirement and how it will be distributed between settlements and sites. Therefore, EHDC is not yet in a position to give neighbourhood areas a housing requirement.

2.2 However, in line with the NPPF, EHDC can provide an annual **indicative** housing figure if requested to do so. Until further progress has been made on the content of the emerging local plan, EHDC is taking a pragmatic approach to neighbourhood plan housing figures to allow communities to maintain progression on the production of neighbourhood

plans, by setting out an **indicative** housing figure for each town or parish within the district, outside the SDNP.

2.3 As detailed in this guidance, the **indicative** housing figure per town/parish has been calculated using the latest standard method equation as detailed in the updated versions of the NPPF and PPG (Dec 2024). It should be noted that the main difference in the standard method (when compared to the previous version), relates to the use of housing stock data (rather than population projections) and an increased adjustment factor relating to affordability.

2.4 Table 1 contains the **indicative** housing figures, by parish, based on the standard method. Utilising GIS, housing stock by parish has been used as the starting point, and then the standard method's affordability adjustment has been applied, as contained in [PPG housing and economic needs assessment \(Dec 2024\)](#).

### **3. Further considerations**

3.1 It should be noted that the **indicative** housing figure as stated in Table 1 is **highly likely to change** through the preparation of the local plan. It is considered that the approach set out in this guidance broadly aligns with the NPPF (para.70) by using the components of the standard method and applying them at a more local geography. This approach takes account of the district-wide local housing need, but rather than using population of the neighbourhood area, it uses housing stock, which mirrors the standard method. However, the strategic nature of this approach to indicative housing figures for town and parishes does not align with the emerging settlement hierarchy or local plan strategy, both of which are being worked on and will be published in the next iteration of the local plan.

3.2 The **indicative** housing figure has taken no consideration of any unmet housing requirement needs of any neighbouring areas (a requirement as stated in Para.62 of the NPPF). Both the currently adopted Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Draft Local Plan (2024) consulted under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 have due consideration to unmet need associated with the SDNP.

3.3 As mentioned previously, the SDNP accounts for 57% of East Hampshire district and is protected for its landscape value. One of the purposes of national parks is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and there is not a requirement to meet housing needs. The JCS planned for the whole district, establishing a

housing requirement of 592 homes per year over the plan period (2011-2028). When distributing growth, the JCS included a strategy that proposed about 100 homes per year within the SDNP part of East Hampshire. The South Downs Local Plan was adopted in 2019 and replaced the JCS for its respected area. Along with various neighbourhood plans within the SDNP, the South Downs Local Plan still looked to provide approximately 100 homes per year within the part of the national park of East Hampshire.

3.4 Despite the above, the Draft South Downs Local Plan consulted on in early 2025 only looks to provide about 60-70 homes per year in East Hampshire. As a result of this and based on historic agreements with the SDNPA, the new East Hampshire District Local Plan will need to consider any unmet needs when establishing its housing requirement and associated strategy to meet that requirement. It will also need to consider the unmet needs of other neighbouring authorities where reasonable to do so. As a consequence, **it is likely that more housing will need to be provided in East Hampshire beyond the indicative figures set out in this guidance.** Therefore, all **indicative** figures should be viewed as a *minimum*.

3.5 Along with the standard method, the approach in this guidance does not take into account a number of constraints within the district, neighboring authorities as well as at an individual parish scale. Therefore, when interpreting Table 1, the list below must be considered, as well as accepting that the presented **indicative** housing figures are highly susceptible to change and variation, resulting in the possibility of **indicative** housing figures being unachievable in some parishes or an underestimation of need in others.

3.6 Other considerations that have not yet been reflected by the **indicative** housing figures per town/parish are:

- Quantum of available land in each town/parish;
- Quantum of available land that can produce deliverable sites identified in each town/parish;
- Alignment with EHDC's emerging spatial strategy;
- National considerations:
  - National Parks (SDNP)
  - National Landscapes (formerly AONB)
  - Special Protection Areas (SPA) and associated 400m buffer
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and associated buffer, where relevant
  - Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)
  - Registered Parks and Gardens

- Ancient Woodland
- Local Green Spaces (identified in Neighbourhood Plans)
- Flood Zones (2&3)
- Area Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)
- Local considerations:
  - Conservation Areas
  - Local Gaps
  - Sites of Importance Nature Conservation (SINC)
  - Open Space
  - Best and most versatile agricultural land (grade 1 & 2)

## **4. Indicative housing figures by parish**

4.1 Table 1 provides a minimum **indicative** annual housing figure for each town/parish within East Hampshire District Council's local planning authority area.

4.2 Table 2 sets out the current commitments (number of dwellings benefitting from planning permission that have not yet been completed) at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. These dwellings can contribute towards meeting the **indicative** housing figures.

**4.3 All the indicative figures within this guidance do not constitute a housing requirement. The emerging local plan will determine the overall housing requirement taking account of unmet needs from neighbouring authorities and the supporting evidence base. Once determined, the local plan will identify the strategy, site allocations and policies in order to meet that requirement. The indicative figures within this guidance are a response to the NPPF (para.70) in order to give neighbourhood planning bodies an indicative figure should they wish to produce neighbourhood plans in advance of the new Local Plan that allocates sites for housing.**

**Table 1 – Minimum annual indicative housing figures**

Parish/Town	Annual indicative housing figure (dwellings)	Plan-period indicative housing figure 2024 – 2042* (dwellings)
<b>The North</b>		
Alton	196	3,531
Four Marks	38	688
Medstead	27	480
Bentley	11	206
Ropley	15	272
Beech	5	92
Bentworth	5	85
Wield	2	37
Froyle	8	142
Binsted	7	132
Shalden	4	69
Lasham	2	30
Worldham	1	10
Farringdon	0	4
Chawton	2	38
<b>The North-East</b>		
Bramshott & Liphook	93	1,675
Whitehill	143	2,569
Headley	52	931
Lindford	25	443
Grayshott	28	496
Kingsley	5	94
Selborne	4	76
<b>The South</b>		
Rowlands Castle	29	526
Horndean	118	2,121
Clanfield	50	892

\*The NPPF requires a plan-period of 15 years from adoption. 18 years has been considered to represent a likely plan-period (2024-2042) to allow for the necessary work on respective neighbourhood plans and the emerging local plan.

**Table 2 – Outstanding Commitments (1<sup>st</sup> April 2024)**

Parish/Town	Large sites (more than 10 dwellings)	Small sites (9 dwellings or less)	Total
<b>The North</b>			
Alton	593	35	628
Four Marks	0	4	4
Medstead	45	28	73
Bentley	0	5	5
Ropley	0	7	7
Beech	0	6	6
Bentworth	0	6	6
Wield	0	1	1
Froyle	0	4	4
Binsted	10	15	25
Shalden	0	0	0
Lasham	0	0	0
Worldham	0	0	0
Farringdon	0	0	0
Chawton	0	2	2
<b>The North-East</b>			
Bramshott & Liphook	81	26	107
Whitehill	2,126	21	2,147
Headley	0	11	11
Lindford	0	7	7
Grayshott	0	23	23
Kingsley	0	1	1
Selborne	0	5	5
<b>The South</b>			
Rowlands Castle	0	11	11
Horndean	943	18	961
Clanfield	0	6	6

Please note that all outstanding commitments are based on planning permissions at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. Any subsequent permissions can be counted towards **indicative** figures.