

Neighbourhood Plans – Indicative Housing Figures

Guidance Note

January 2026



1. Changes to national planning policy

1.1 The Government released an updated version of the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) \(Dec 2024\) in 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, calculated using the standard method. Updated affordability ratios in March 2025, outlined a need for 1,124 dwellings per annum (dpa) for East Hampshire, using the standard method. 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 (up to 90 homes a year). In line with the NPPF, East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) will need to consider unmet housing needs from neighbouring areas through the plan-making process.

1.3 The standard method only produces a need figure for the local authority areas, not accounting for separate local planning authority boundaries. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) allows for an alternative method for calculating housing need, however, it should take into consideration the best available evidence on the amount of existing housing stock within their planning authority boundary, local house prices, earnings and housing affordability.

1.4 We have recently collaborated with the SDNPA and the 12 other Councils with land in the National Park to commission a study that looks at how housing need could be apportioned between the separate local planning authority areas. The study concluded that the most sensible and pragmatic approach is to apportion housing need on the basis of the local housing stock distribution. The study can be found [here](#).

1.5 Apportioning each district's standard method housing need into the areas inside and outside the SDNP results in a housing need for East Hampshire's local plan area of 828 dpa, and for the East Hampshire portion of the SDNP of 296 dpa.

1.6 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.

1.7 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.

1.8 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 allocations³². 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 area³³, 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 progress 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. This document has been updated in January 2026 to take into account the new adjustment factor in relation to affordability from March 2025, that changed the overall housing requirement for East Hampshire and subsequently the indicative housing figure for each parish and to update the commitments from 1st April 2025.

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 (March 2025) 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, neighbouring 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 1st April 2025. 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 2025 – 2043* (dwellings)
The North		
Alton	190	3,413
Four Marks	37	672
Medstead	26	467
Bentley	11	197
Ropley	15	261
Beech	5	88
Bentworth	5	86
Wield	2	39
Froyle	7	132
Binsted	7	126
Shalden	4	67
Lasham	2	29
Worldham	1	9
Farringdon	0	4
Chawton	2	38
The North-East		
Bramshott & Liphook	89	1,611
Whitehill	136	2,450
Headley	50	891
Lindford	24	430
Grayshott	26	465
Kingsley	5	95
Selborne	4	75
The South		
Rowlands Castle	29	514
Horndean	114	2,049
Clanfield	48	867

*The NPPF requires a plan-period of 15 years from adoption. 18 years has been considered to represent a likely plan-period (2025-2043) to allow for the necessary work on respective neighbourhood plans and the emerging local plan.

**The housing stock figures have been updated in November 2025 utilising updated GIS data that provides a more accurate starting point than the previous figures.

Table 2 – Outstanding Commitments (1st April 2025)

Parish/Town	Large sites (more than 10 dwellings)	Small sites (9 dwellings or less)	Total
The North			
Alton	422	49	471
Four Marks	69	8	77
Medstead	54	11	65
Bentley	12	16	28
Ropley	0	11	11
Beech	0	6	6
Bentworth	0	7	7
Wield	0	1	1
Froyle	0	4	4
Binsted	0	20	20
Shalden	0	4	4
Lasham	0	1	1
Worldham	0	0	0
Farringdon	0	0	0
Chawton	0	2	2
The North-East			
Bramshott & Liphook	39	28	67
Whitehill	1,885	23	1,908
Headley	0	18	18
Lindford	0	4	4
Grayshott	0	6	6
Kingsley	0	1	1
Selborne	0	6	6
The South			
Rowlands Castle	61	11	72
Horndean	999	24	1,023
Clanfield	0	8	8

Please note that all outstanding commitments are based on planning permissions at 1st April 2025. Any subsequent permissions can be counted towards **indicative** figures.