

# Wealden District Council Household and Population Predictions

Using Data provided by the  
Office of National Statistics

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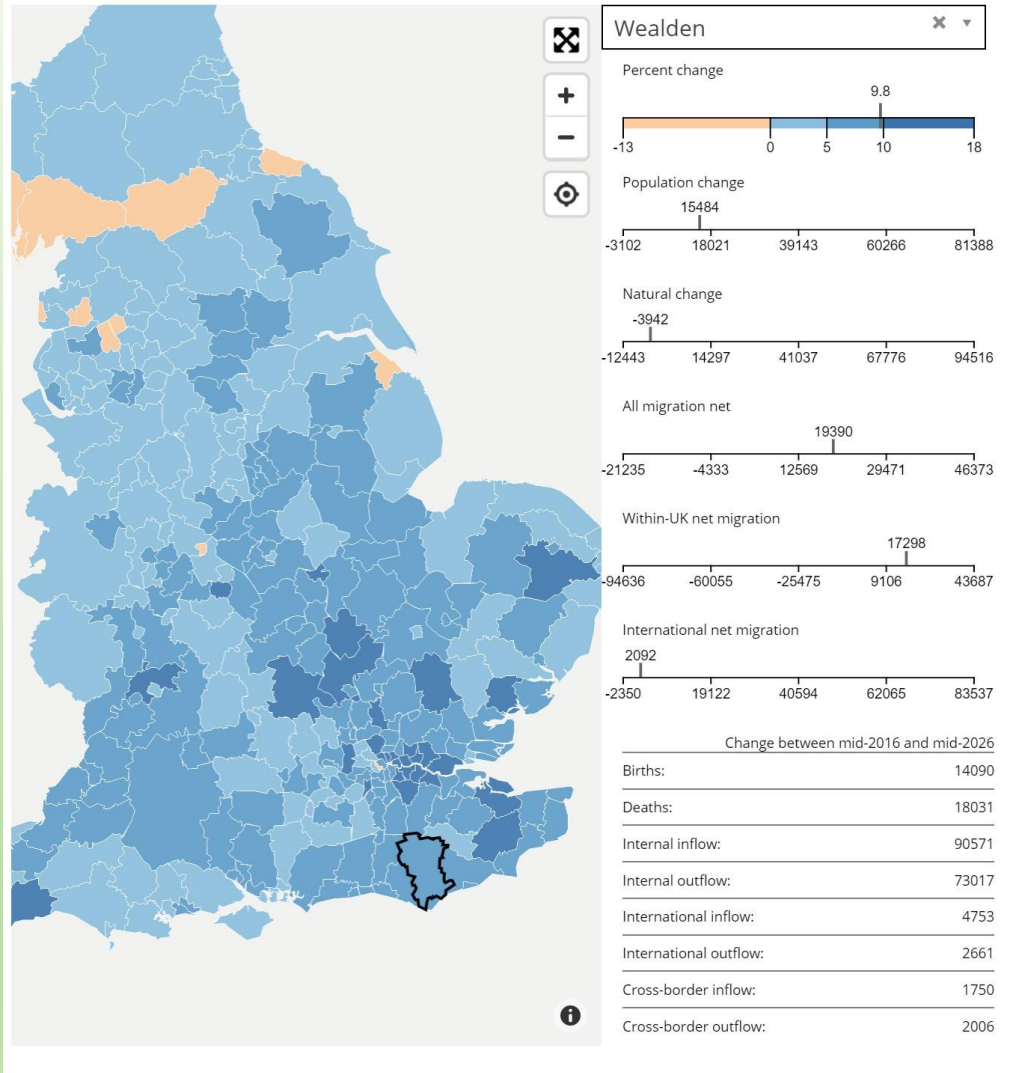
Forward

- For several years I have been involved with planning issues both locally in Heathfield and in the Wealden District.
- Throughout this time I have been disappointed and deeply concerned by the approach shown by Wealden District Planning authority which has been to develop a plan that delivers a far greater number of homes than required in the District if population growth is considered.
- This has now reached the alarming situation where the Wealden population increasing by 9601 people – but Wealden District Council say they are planning to build 12310 houses. In other words they are planning now to have an oversupply of at least 8209 homes by 2028 based on the ONS average occupancy of 2.28 per dwelling.
- Wealden residents with families and mortgages will find their homes being devalued by oversupply ... resulting in negative equity and financial distress.
- Developers and builders will always favour green field land rather than brown field because it is cheaper and quicker to build on 'new' land. Thus the oversupply of homes will result in increasing loss of Wealden's most precious asset... the High Weald Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Given that the AONB attracts visitors to towns and villages in Wealden ... WDC's strategy to oversupply homes in the District will not only impoverish residents but will also rapidly diminish the attractions of the AONB.... and starve the local tourism-based businesses.
- I am confident that the risks and issues I am raising are well understood by Wealden residents who are very anxious about WDC's desire for greater numbers of homes in the District. They know that most jobs needed will be outside the District leading to more travelling, more pollution and greater cost of home ownership.

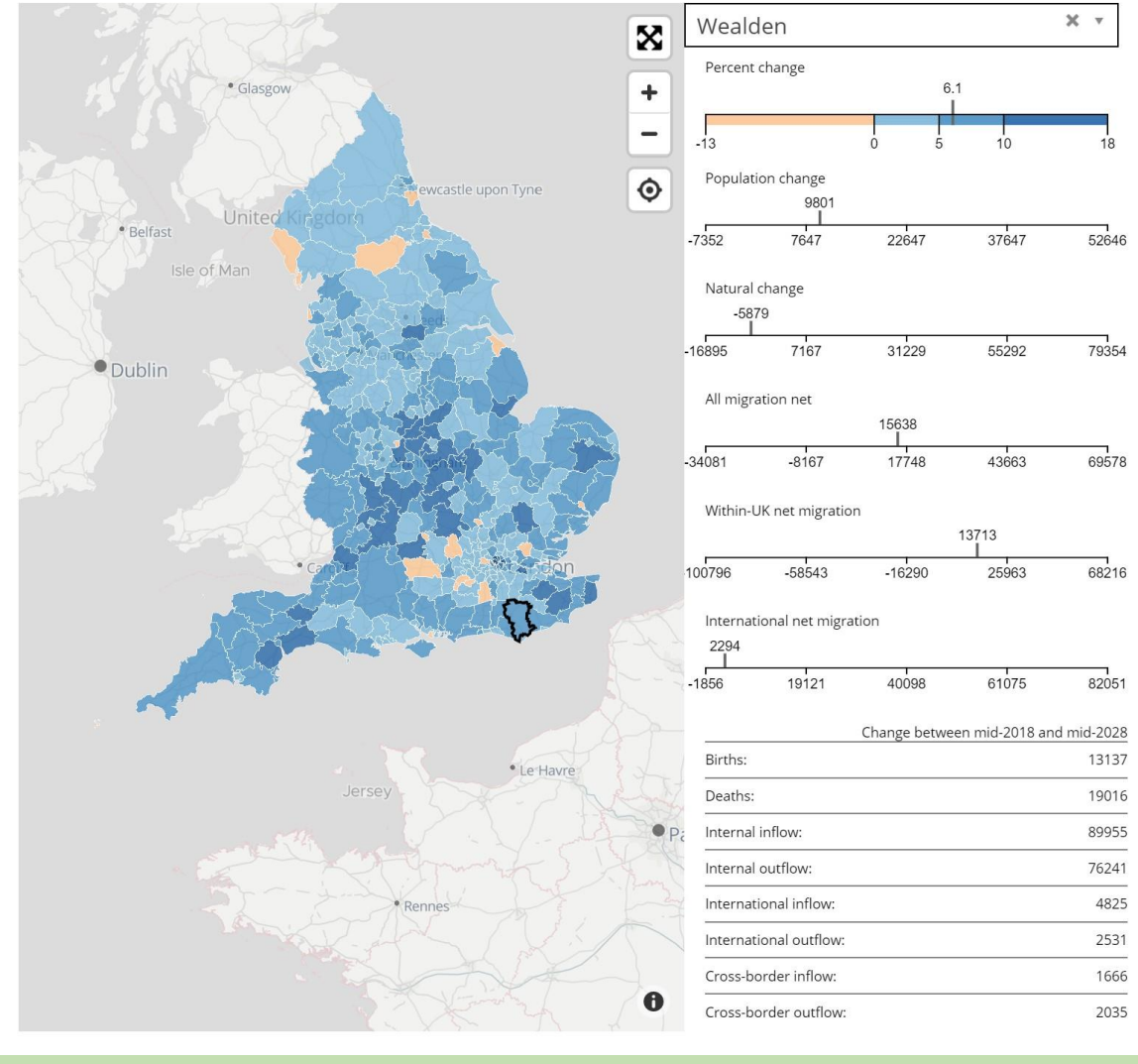
- [4. ONS population comparing 2016 and 2018 data.](#)
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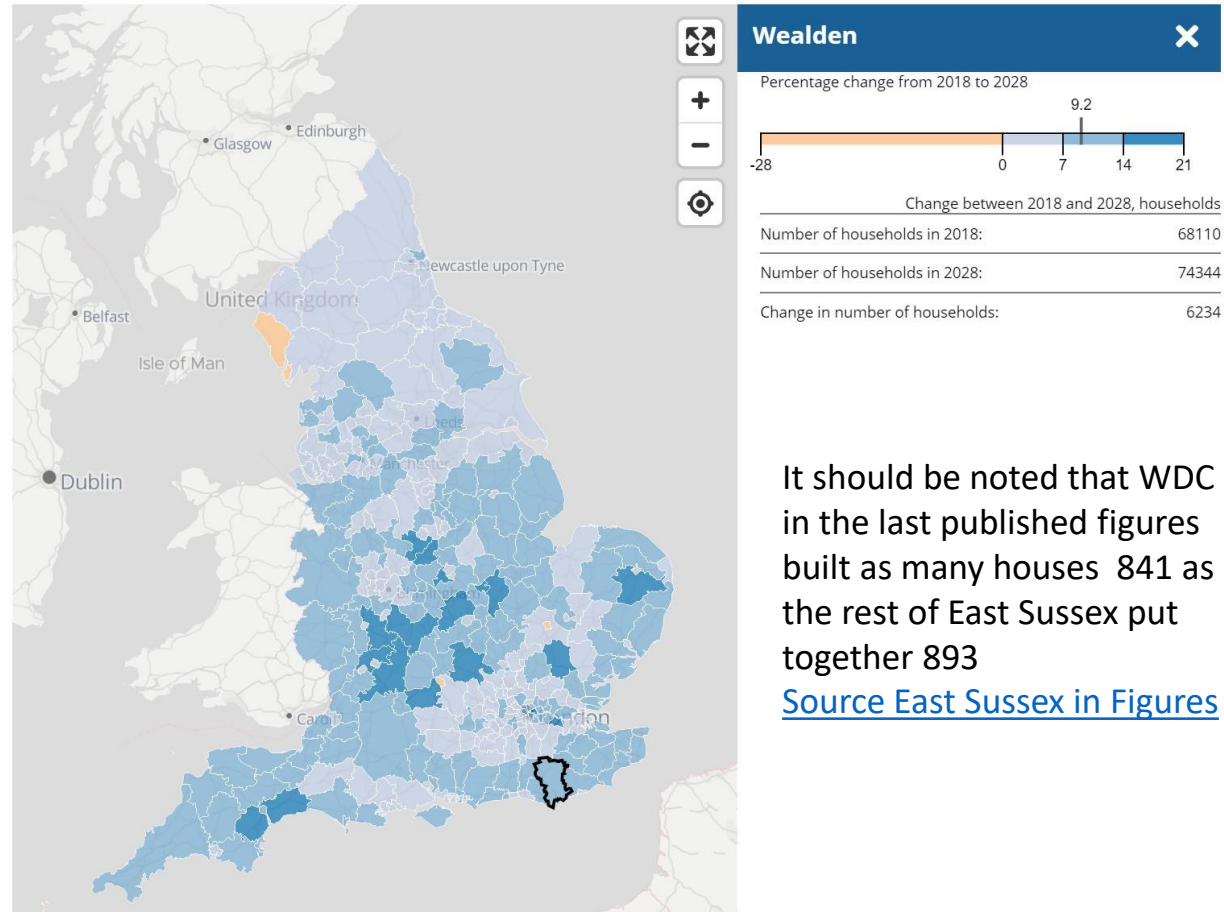
**Figure 2: Population change for local authorities in England between mid-2016 and mid-2026**



**Figure 4: Population change for local authorities in England between mid-2018 and mid-2028**



**Figure 3: Projected percentage change in number of households for local authorities in England, 2018 to 2028**



It should be noted that WDC in the last published figures built as many houses 841 as the rest of East Sussex put together 893

[Source East Sussex in Figures](#)



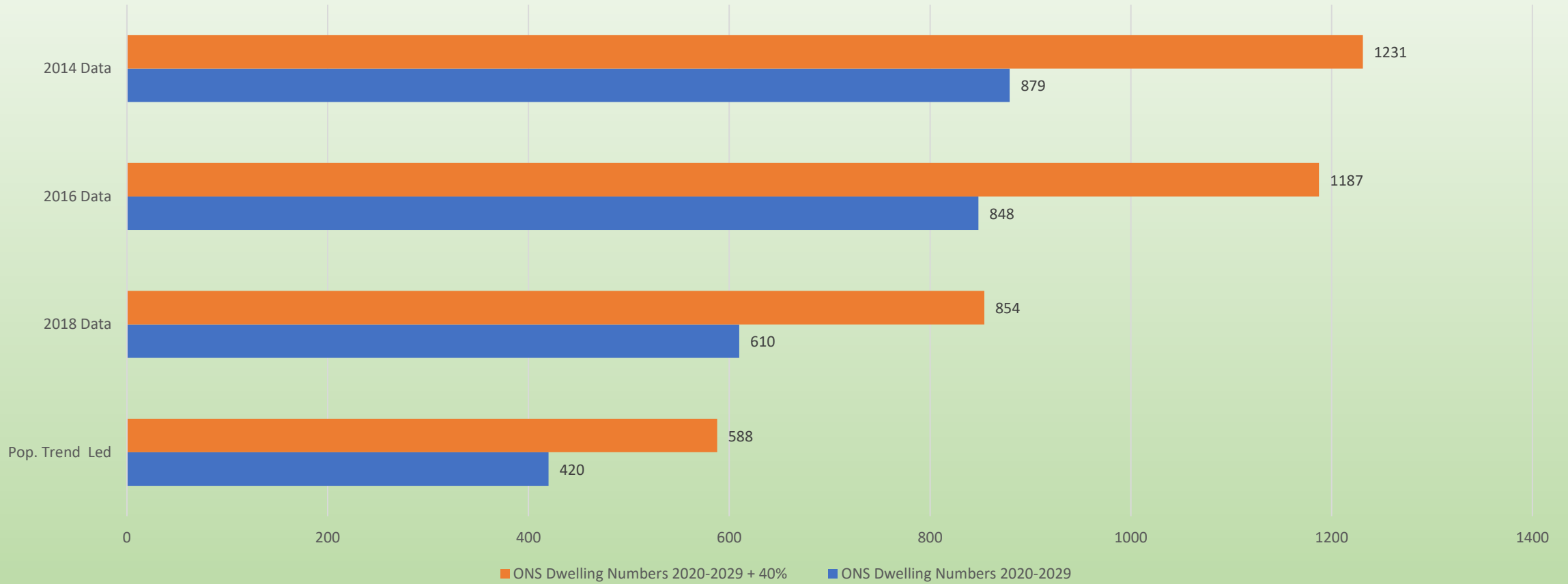
Household Projections using data from 3 releases 2014,2016,2018

[2014 source](#)      [2016 Source](#)      [2018 Source](#)      For Reference

Area code	Area name		Difference 2019-2029	Changes	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
E07000065 2018 Household Projections	Wealden		6100		65487	66294	66933	67536	68110	68808	69407	69971	70652
E07000065 2016 Household Projections	Wealden		8482		65488	66,295.000	66.934	67.802	68.684	69.534	70.349	71.133	72.044
E07000065 2014 Household Projections	Wealden		8794		65.702	<b>66.534</b>	<b>67.398</b>	<b>68.301</b>	<b>69.219</b>	<b>70.125</b>	<b>71.016</b>	<b>71.892</b>	<b>72.773</b>
2018 Wealden Population Projections							<b>155044</b>	<b>155917</b>	<b>157140</b>	<b>158273</b>	<b>159356</b>	<b>160425</b>	<b>161427</b>
<b>Average household size Table 427</b>			ONS Data 2016	-0.17			2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.29	2.29
<b>Population Crossed Check Table 426</b>			ONS Data 2016	31			155	157	159	161	163	163	165
		25 year average	Average 2020-2029	25 year Total									
<b>Household increase based on 2018</b>		537	<b>610</b>	12736		807	639	603	574	697	599	564	681
<b>Household increase based on 2016</b>	Average->	785	<b>848</b>	19620		807	639	868	882	850	815	784	911
<b>Household increase based on 2014</b>	Average->	910	<b>879</b>	20927		832	864	903	918	906	891	876	881
<b>Including Afordability Factor (1.4) 2018</b>	Average->	<b>752</b>	<b>854</b>	18806			895	844	804	976	839	790	953
<b>Including Afordability Factor (1.4) 2016</b>	Average->	<b>1099</b>	<b>1187</b>	26523			895	1215	1235	1190	1141	1098	1275
<b>Including Afordability Factor (1.4) 2014</b>	Average->	<b>1274</b>	<b>1231</b>	28133			1210	1264	1285	1268	1247	1226	1233

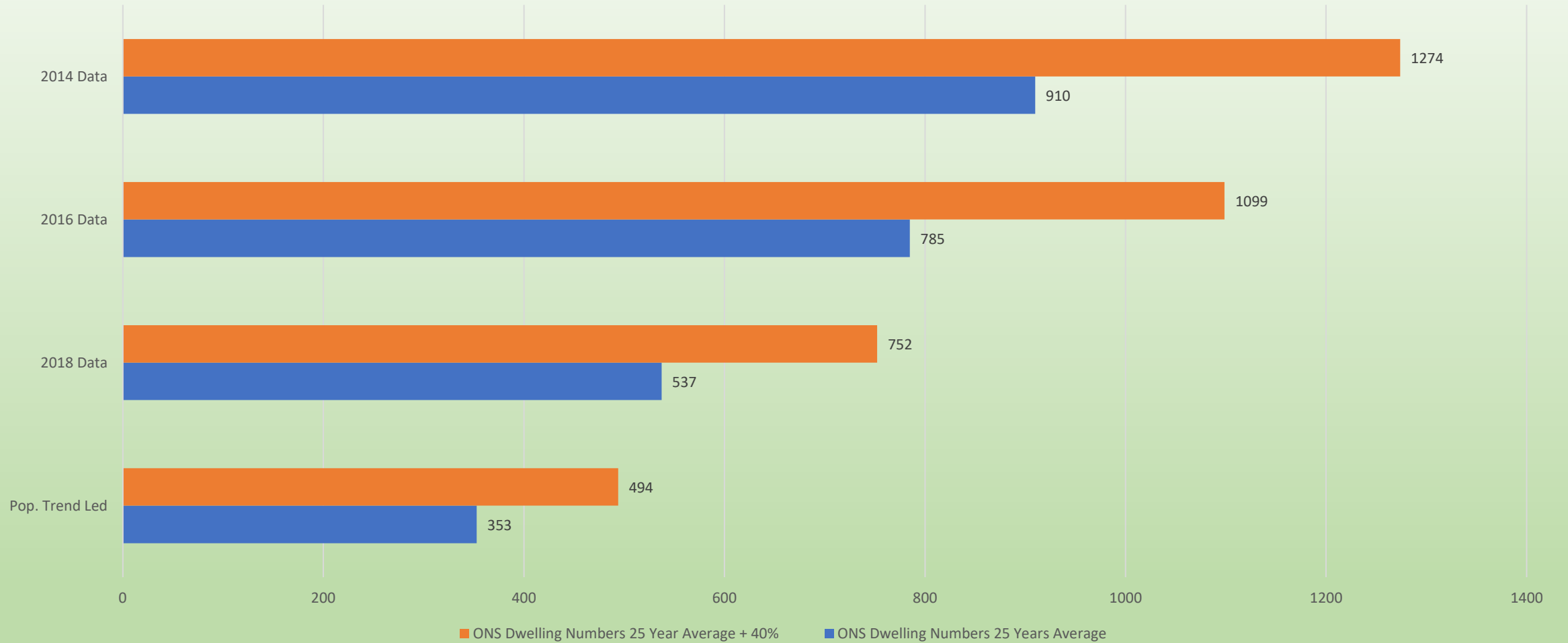
2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043
71316	71958	72547	73138	73749	74344	74907	75426	75953	76457	76971	77468	77950	78426	78881	79332	79783	80223	80675	81122	81543
72.938	73.810	74.646	75.492	76.363	77.208	78.016	78.792	79.570	80.318	81.067	81.798	82.519	83.222	83.899	84.571	85.240	85.896	86.554		
<b>73.664</b>	<b>74.551</b>	<b>75.421</b>	<b>76.302</b>	<b>77.179</b>	<b>78.050</b>	<b>78.919</b>	<b>79.767</b>	<b>80.612</b>	<b>81.431</b>	<b>82.238</b>	<b>83.019</b>	<b>83.785</b>	<b>84.537</b>	<b>85.266</b>	<b>85.963</b>	<b>86.629</b>				
<b>162374</b>	<b>163318</b>	<b>164190</b>	<b>165046</b>	<b>165816</b>	<b>166574</b>	<b>167307</b>	<b>168004</b>	<b>168699</b>	<b>169347</b>	<b>169978</b>	<b>170578</b>	<b>171159</b>	<b>171745</b>	<b>172307</b>	<b>172885</b>	<b>173474</b>	174063	174653	175240	175813
2.29	2.29	2.29	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.15		
167	169	171	170	172	174	176	178	176	178	180	181	183	182	183	185	186	187	186		
665	641	589	591	612	595	563	519	526	505	514	497	483	476	455	451	452	440	452	448	421
894	872	836	846	871	845	808	776	778	748	749	731	721	703	677	672	669	656	658		
891	887	870	881	877	871	869	848	845	819	807	781	766	752	729	697	666				
931	898	825	827	856	833	789	726	737	706	719	695	676	666	637	632	632	616	632	627	589
1252	1221	1170	1184	1219	1183	1131	1086	1089	1047	1049	1023	1009	984	948	941	937	918	921		
1247	1242	1218	1233	1228	1219	1217	1187	1183	1147	1130	1093	1072	1053	1021	976	932				

### 10 Year Household Projections



Population Trend Led figures derived from ONS data 9601 occupancy @ 2.28

### 25 Year Household Projections



Population Trend Led figures derived from ONS Data 19775 occupancy @ 2.24



## Questions

1. Why is the Government still insisting that Local Authorities use outdated 2014 data instead of newer data?
2. Why is the 40% affordability factor used as it is having no effect on house prices, developers continue to drip feed the market to keep prices up.
3. Why do Government and Local Authorities keep blaming each other when clearly Government set the targets through the bi-annual Housing Projections

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/householdprojectionsforengland/2018based> below is an extract from Nusrat Ghani MP

I am very grateful to you for drawing your views on this planning issue to my attention. However, my ability to influence such situations is limited, given that planning is the responsibility of the local authority, Wealden District Council. It is simply not within my gift to change the outcome of local planning applications. Planning is debated and voted on by your council and councillors.

4. WDC consistently deliver over 200 windfall houses annually but still refuse to count them in their 5-year land supply number, even though the NPPF allows for it if it can be shown to be convincing data. Para 70 here - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)
5. Please can you explain with a population increase of 9601 between 2018-2029 and an average occupancy rate of 2.28 for the same period why the housing need (OAN) is so high. WDC says 12310 in 10 years which is more houses than population growth.

## Questions Page 2

6. What is your response to this article on Sussex Councils calling for a review on 5-year land supply -

[https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1686898/sussex-councils-call-ministers-suspend-housing-land-supply-requirement-wake-covid-](https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1686898/sussex-councils-call-ministers-suspend-housing-land-supply-requirement-wake-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR2I2cyEl4qDJGcjysDUr8ZPr5zRvahR_Cll_LcRe7GSWfBCGhq54mVOOg)

[19?fbclid=IwAR2I2cyEl4qDJGcjysDUr8ZPr5zRvahR\\_Cll\\_LcRe7GSWfBCGhq54mVOOg](https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1686898/sussex-councils-call-ministers-suspend-housing-land-supply-requirement-wake-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR2I2cyEl4qDJGcjysDUr8ZPr5zRvahR_Cll_LcRe7GSWfBCGhq54mVOOg)

7. What action will the government take to bring the empty homes back to occupation?

<https://www.rics.org/uk/news-insight/future-of-surveying/sustainability/empty-homes-the-true-picture/>

8. Will the government act to ensure that the million plus homes with planning permission are built out rather than the land just sitting there, this combined with the short- and long-term empty houses of over 500k this will meet the government's 1.5m new homes 5-year target.

8. Should Community Infrastructure Levy be reformed to a variable scale depending on the number of bedrooms?

It is clearly acknowledged by residents and WDC that smaller properties are needed in Wealden. It should be noted that at any one time there are over 3000 houses for sale in Wealden mainly 3 bedrooms plus.

9. Other countries seem to be more inventive than the UK what are your thoughts on this article from New Zealand?

<https://www.oneroof.co.nz/news/first-tiny-homes-village-launches-in-new-zealand-37502?fbclid=IwAR26mgSda1ZN7xa9r4Uyc5LHOaBAUvThL5dqqVc3uqfDiSH6wo64opatKsA>

10. There are ways and means of building in the High Weald AONB sympathetically, will the government uphold its pledge to protect the UK's natural heritage? We have on our doorstep a prime example of what can be achieved – Flimwell Park – [Video 1](#) [Video 2](#) [Video 3](#)

Top Questions asked by other contributors for Wealden District Council:

1. Why does WDC Planning insist on using older statistics from 2014 to drive higher and higher number of homes ... when the new 2018 data shows decline in numbers of homes required?
2. Why is feedback from residents ignored ... in consultation/s they have consistently said that they want brownfield sites prioritised and the AONB protected?
3. Why do Parish and District Councillors follow WDC 'guidelines' and do not represent the views of their constituents?
4. Why does WDC fail time and time again to protect the AONB our greatest and most precious irreplaceable asset?
5. Why is WDC so against resident involvement ... they have a developer and land agent meetings ... but none for residents?
6. Why are the many documents produced by WDC so large and not written in plain English

Questions at UK Government level:

1. Across the UK planning approval has already been given for over 1Million homes ... Why isn't Central Government pushing developers and builders to get those homes built before any more permissions are given?
2. Across the UK over 600,000 homes are empty ... Why isn't Central Government putting greater effort into bringing empty houses back in to use?
3. Why is the government continuing to pursue failing policies such as Buy to let , Affordability Factor?
4. Are the use of Dwelling Led Projection rather than trend designed to migrate heavily population London?



## Conclusion Page 1

With the failure on the Local Plan in January of 2020, Developers and WDC seem to be using the void to accelerate the number of approved applications with extraordinarily little thought for the environment and the strain on infrastructure.

The UK and the World have and are still going through a major crisis with the COVID-19 situation, it is evident that peoples way of life has changed dramatically and will in some degree remain that way forever, shopping – more local purchasing, with shops moving back to pre-mass car ownership and delivering more. Farming will need more land to ensure the UK becomes less reliant on food imports. It has become evident that Green Open Spaces are more important than ever before. My local Route 21 (London to Paris Cycle Route) and the Heathfield section having a 10-fold increase in footfall.

With East Sussex and the ONS data showing Wealden will have a population growth of 9601 between 2018 and 2028 and ONS data showing and average dwelling occupancy of 2.28 over the same period. Housing need calculated using the simple calculation people divided by occupancy gives a housing need 4211 far different than the government figures.

It appears the use of green field over Brown Field sites by Wealden is short sighted and damaging to the environment and to the credibility of both national and local government.

## Conclusion Page 2

It is clear from all the data WDC are being asked to build far beyond it needs by central government and the myth that keeps being communicated to residents that is down the local Authority is wrong.

It can also be concluded that if WDC achieves its 1231 per year target then employment for most of the increased population will have to be sought outside of the district.

Wealden as stated by the WDC council website is 2/3 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is probably its biggest asset in terms of opportunity for tourism employment. As Wealden will never be an area for mass manufacturing (people heavy), and with Gatwick being probably the largest non-Public employer which may change going forward, the loss of Green Space to housing seems counterproductive.

With an accelerating declining housing need shown by the ONS data 2014-2016-2018, it is a widely held view by Wealden Residents that developers and associated businesses have more influence than the often-ignored opinions and views held by residents. Based on articles such as this in the [Telegraph](#) it may have some foundation. This may sound harsh but until Government ask Local Authorities to use all current and up to date data, it is a conclusion many are making.

Notes



**Wealden District  
Council  
Household and  
Population  
Predictions**

**Part Two**

**Author  
Mike Gadd**



With the imminent release of the Planning White Paper in which some interesting statements are made –

Source <https://www.push.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Item-9-Appendix-1-Housing-White-Paper.pdf>

1 Planning for the right homes in the right places

1.1 The White Paper states that "if we are to build the homes this country needs, we need to make sure that enough land is released in the right places and that the best possible use is made of that land, and that local communities have control over where development goes and what it looks like".

Please see comment on [page 4](#)

[And a comment by Robert Jenrick is the Housing Secretary](#)

And protected land will be just that - our Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and rich heritage – will be protected as the places, views and landscapes we cherish most and passed on to the next generation as set out in our manifesto.

The following figures have been updated. [Page 3](#)

Why have I used a picture of Dorset in a presentation about Wealden?

Dorset represents the amount of Greenfields lost to housing development in the last 25 years..

Source – based on data from <https://www.ceh.ac.uk/data>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8504459/Britain-concreted-green-fields-equivalent-size-Dorset-past-25-years.html>

**6227** - The number of dwellings WDC have with Planning Permission that are unbuilt (April 2020)

**5375** The number of dwellings WDC have allowed to be built on GREENFIELDS (April 2020)

**1349** The number of new applications WDC received in the period May, June and July 2020

Source - <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-weekly-list/>

**1875** - The number of dwelling WDC built out in the period 2018/20 (April 2020)

**54%** - The percentage WDC built of all dwelling completed in East Sussex for the same period

Source - <http://www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk/webview/welcome.html>

**12310** - The number WDC are planning over the next 10-year period. (January 2020)

Source - <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/FAQs-14-Jan-2020.pdf>



**This is the Number  
of Houses Applied for or  
with Planning Permission  
that are yet to be Built in  
WEALDEN**

**7576**

why are the developers  
are not building them if  
there is a housing crisis

Put more Pressure On Quality of Life Services

Accelerate the loss of Green Fields

Help out Neighbouring Councils Build Less

Is that what we need or want?

Create more Traffic Congestion

Destroy the Natural Beauty of Wealden

Force People to Travel for Employment

## Comment

With the statement on [page 2](#) in mind regarding community involvement how does this stack up when at a recent WDC planning meeting an applications that received nearly 1000 letters of objection by residents, was objected to by the Parish Council, was not supported by English Heritage and WDC own Heritage Officer. Yet the application was still passed?

Application can be viewed here - <https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=136395>

During a recent consultation on a Statement of Community Involvement, the idea of a resident's panel was floated like the Land Agents and Developers Panel WDC currently hold approximately 4 times per year, the idea was dismissed publicly by WDC who suggested that all communications go through the Parish Panel. However, on investigation this seems a bit of a hit and miss with poor attendance and limited opportunity. On a positive note, I am in dialogue with WDC and so far, we have communicated well, and the indications are that it will continue as the new local plan progresses.

SCI can be found here - [https://consult.wealden.gov.uk/portal/planning/sci/sci\\_2020?tab=list](https://consult.wealden.gov.uk/portal/planning/sci/sci_2020?tab=list)

One of the reasons the local plan failed in January of this year was on a point of Duty to Cooperate with neighbouring councils, however WDC have clearly demonstrated they are already compensating for other councils by the sheer number of dwelling completed compare with the poor performance of its neighbours



**Wealden District  
Council Household  
and Population  
Predictions  
New Planning  
Consultations/White  
Paper Update**

**Part Three**

**Author  
Mike Gadd**



The above image shows the impact of the 86% increase in the number of dwelling imposed by WEALDEN District Council on the Village of East Hoathly. [More details here.](#)

## Contents

1. Revised dwelling numbers Based on Consultations Papers
2. Protected Land In and Around Wealden
3. Initial reaction to some base proposals in the Consultations





## Predicted housing numbers for Wealden and its Neighbours based on new formula in Changes to the Current Planning System and White Paper: Planning for the Future Consultations Papers

Authority		Eastbourne	Lewes	Mid Sussex	Rother	Sevenoaks	Tunbridge Wells	Wealden
Data used in Calculations	Latest yearly build Figures available	165	576	811	247	378	569	1024
	Household Projections 2018 10 year average	288.90	366.10	495.30	504.60	314.80	347.40	601.90
	Dwelling Affordability 2009	6.48	8.28	8.72	9.23	8.98	8.32	9.47
	Dwelling Affordability 2019	8.20	11.20	13.00	12.40	13.10	12.50	11.55
	Difference In Dwelling Affordability 2009-2019	1.72	2.92	4.28	3.17	4.12	4.18	2.08
	All Dwelling Stock 2019	48925	45858	64455	45602	50514	51339	70029
	White Paper Affordability Factor Part 1	1.26	1.45	1.56	1.53	1.57	1.53	1.47
	White Paper Affordability Factor Part 2	0.43	0.73	1.07	0.79	1.03	1.05	0.52
Calculated Numbers Based on Data Source from Above	Total Affordability Factor	1.69	2.18	2.63	2.32	2.60	2.58	1.99
	Total District Build Target Per Year	489	798	1304	1169	818	895	1199
	15 Year Build Target Total	7334	11971	19558	17541	12271	13425	17984
	20 Year Build Target Total	9779	15962	26078	23388	16362	17900	23978
	Percentage Increase over existing Stock	20%	35%	40%	51%	32%	35%	34%
	White Paper Protected Land AONB + NP +GB +SSSI	50%	56%	65%	83%	90%	70%	64%
	Percentage increase over current build Rate	196%	39%	61%	373%	116%	57%	17%
	Key Data current build rate VS Target build rate showing % increase needed to achieve Target build number							

Adjustment Factor

$$= \left[ \left( \frac{(Local\ affordability\ ratio_{t=0} - 4)}{4} \right) \times 0.25 \right] + \left[ (Local\ affordability\ ratio_{t=0} - Local\ affordability\ ratio_{t=-10}) \times 0.25 \right] + 1$$

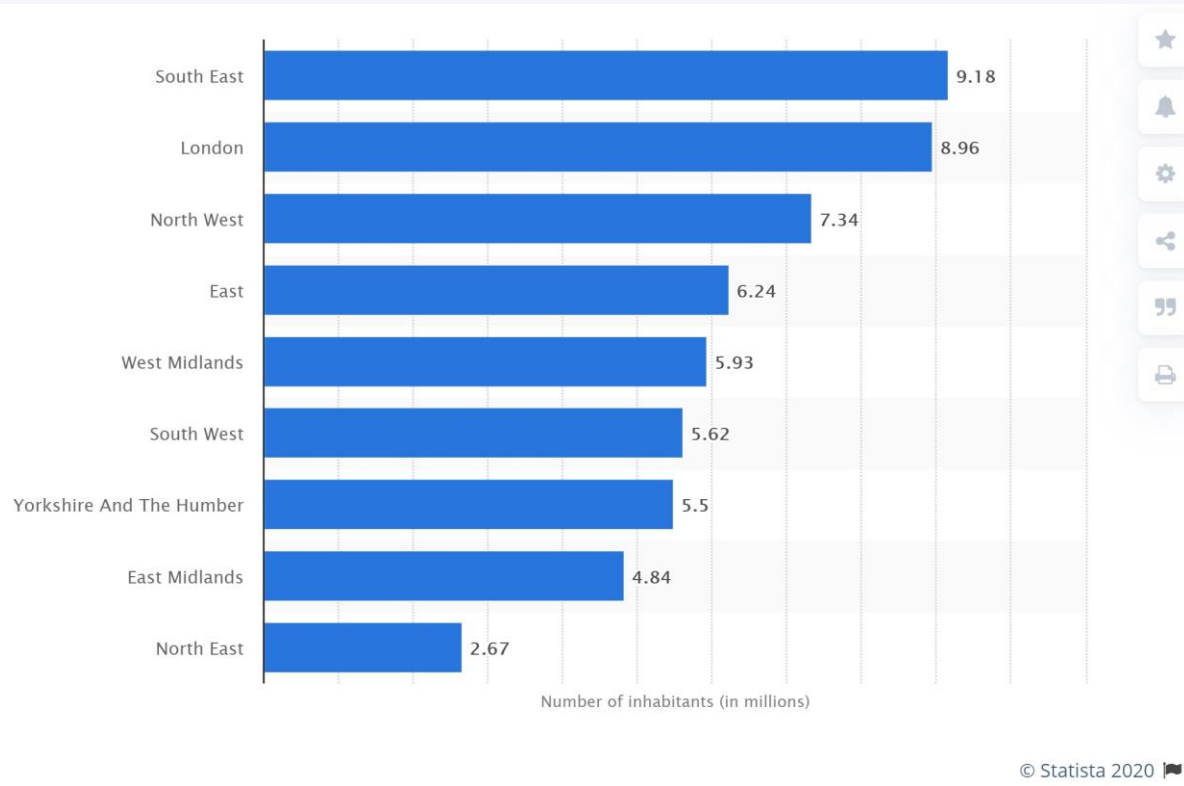
Where  $t = 0$  is current year and  $t = -10$  is 10 years back.

Dwelling Stock	Household Projection 2018	Planning Changes Consultation
Dwelling Affordability	East Sussex In Figures	White Paper Consultation



This Chart shows the amount of Protected Land in Proposed In White Paper

Protected area	Total Area	Protected	Percentage	AONB	SSSI	National Parks	Green Belt
Eastbourne	4416	2208	50%			2208	
Lewes	29200	16352	56%			16352	
Mid Sussex	33403	21712	65%	16702		5010	
Rother	51140	42446	83%	42446			
Sevenoaks	36777	33099	90%				33,099
Tunbridge Wells	32600	27710	70%	19560			8150
Wealden	83502	53788	64%	44256	3687	5845	
Total	271038	197316	73%	122964	3687	29416	41249
SSSI all fall within AONB except Pevensey Levels and Buxted Park (3687)						Green belt includes AONB	



The links to the data can be viewed by clicking the relevant graph.

The population data on the left shows that out of 56.29m people that live in England 32.23% live in London and the Southeast.

The housing projection on the right shows that the new standard method for calculating housing required for England, would generate 337.3k dwellings 45.69% (154.8k) of these are destined for London and the Southeast.

Why does the UK government think that a strategy of accelerating the population growth in the most densely populated area of England, is a wise decision and would be acceptable to the current voting population in that region.

**Ministers Answer Please.**

1. Using the 2018 Household predictions is welcome and is a move in the right directions.
  - a. However there still seems to be a desire to justify the political statement “we need to build 300,000 dwellings per year”.
  - b. So, the Affordability Factor formula gets adjusted to back up the 300,000-dwelling statement.
  - c. The Affordability Factor fails to bring prices down (house prices still rising all be it slower because of Covid 19).
  - d. No account has been taken for those homeowners that will be affected financial if the Affordability factor did work.
  - e. So, based on the above the Affordability Factor is it just a justification to keep the 300,000.
2. Removing the 35% affordable dwelling number that must be included in applications. (Short Term Measure)
  - a. It will not mean more homes are built just deprive those least able to purchase to do so.
  - b. The affordable 35% is often circumvented with the cooperation of the local planning.
  - c. Why, because of the insistence of maintaining the 20% profit margin guarantee.
  - d. Having worked for one of the largest food manufactures in Europe 3-4% was the norm as it is for most large sector food companies.
  - e. Viability Reports are supposed to be submitted when applications include affordable but there seems extraordinarily little evidence that this is happening, they only appear when developers want to remove the affordable element.
3. Why no sanctions for developers not building out the 1,033,920 dwelling with planning permission (Source - [Local Government Association, 20 February 2020](#)).
  - a. The only mention in the proposals regarding the building industry is more money (SME) to further enhance the protected 20% margins.
  - b. Why not void any planning applications older than 2 years if building has not started the threat may get building started, if Planning Permission is voided current applicant should apply again under current planning and environmental conditions that apply at the time of the new application.
  - c. Shorten the time for application,
    - a. Outline to last only 3 months before Reserved Matters must be submitted.
    - b. Building to start within 6 months of reserved matters being awarded.
    - c. As now Councils to determine within 12 weeks on both Outline and Reserved Matters.
    - d. This gives a total of 15 months until building starts at present it can take up to 10 years or longer, because developers want to drip feed the market to ensure house prices keep rising and to maintain their protected 20% margin. (Example - 3 developments along Burwash Road, Heathfield are 3 years and 9 months without a brick being laid. Even though on one application the developers said he would start within 3 months to get permission). Housing Crisis????
4. Protected land should be protected not put into a consultations document.
  - a. As shown by a recent decision at Crowborough within Wealden AONB currently protected land, shows it is being abused.



If England were a product and government was a business, that business would make it a core strategy to protect its Unique Selling Points and the Added Value that comes from them.

A business would use the tools it created to identify ways of protecting those USP's, an example of this is the [DEFRA Magic Map Tool](#), using this those USP's are easily identified. The Protected Areas mentioned in the [Planning for the Future White Paper](#).

Again, using this Magic Maps, it clearly shows areas that could be used for dwelling growth without the need to damage the USP's.

Indeed, the government has shown this is possible by identifying the [Oxford to Cambridge Arc](#), but then goes on to totally disregard it as demonstrated by [page 5 of this presentation](#). Once again, I come back to the question is the government giving into the house building industry and their [quest for profit](#) (see page 1) and in the process accelerating the erosion of England's unique selling points, the environmental landscapes, countryside heritage and agriculture assets that future generations will need.