

# Amersham Town Council

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## **Response from Amersham Town Council to proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system – 24 September 2024**

### 1. Response to Chapter 4 – Method for assessing housing needs

Amersham Town Council believes that the assessment of housing needs should adopt a proportionate approach, based on evidence of need, rather than a statistical calculated formula. A formulaic approach is too prescriptive and does not take into account local requirements.

### 2. Response to Chapter 5 – Brownfield, grey belt and Green Belt

The Town Council agrees in principle with the concept of ‘grey belt’ and has sympathy with the intent. However, it was felt that greater clarity is required on the definition of Grey Belt land.

### 3. Response to Chapter 6 – Delivering affordable, well designed homes & places

The Town Council objects to removing the minimum 25% First Homes requirement. Council believes that development should ensure an adequate housing stock to provide homes for the younger generation, to encourage them to stay in the local area, as well as smaller homes for the elderly. There is a clear need to provide homes for young people. Affordable housing should also incorporate a proportion of social housing. The best way to achieve these aims would be for the percentages to be mandated.

In terms of design of new dwellings, the key focus should be on sustainable low-carbon development, so applications for sustainable development should be supported.

### 4. Response to Chapter 7 - Building Infrastructure to grow the economy

The Town Council believes that infrastructure investment planning needs to be addressed by government and proposals for investment should be brought forward. To be viable, the proposed significant increase in housing supply needs to be supported by adequate, planned and budgeted infrastructure, including water supply, sewerage, power supply, roads, GPs, schools and general public services.

### 5. Response to Chapter 9 – Supporting green energy and the environment

- Government should consider strengthening allowances within the NPPF to go above and beyond national standards for climate change and sustainability within their local plans.
- Government should prioritise the adoption of the Future Homes Standard.
- “Climate change Mitigation & Adaptation” should be given the same footing as Landscaping or Flooding to ensure adequate priority and resourcing is given.
- Ring-fenced funding should be provided to authorities for resourcing Climate Change consideration within planning policy.

### 6. General Comments

Members feel central government should provide greater support to enable principal authorities to build capability within the planning departments, in order to speed up the planning process. Planning authorities are currently under-resourced and government support would help to accelerate the application process.