# Brief Synopsis of the Government White Paper on Housing: “Fixing our broken housing market” by Philip Plato. 7/2/2017

To save you trawling through the whole White Paper, Philip Plato has done this already for us picking out the key points that affect the Brown Not Green Campaign. When quoting the White Paper in your letters to councillors (See [How to Lobby - Brown Not Green](http://brownnotgreen.weebly.com/how-to-lobby.html)) it may help you to quote some of the following key elements of the White Paper and use them in your letters. Philip’s words are in *italics* and he uses **bold format** to emphasise key statements.

1. *There has been a lot of talk about these new proposals possibly involving wide scale release of Green Belt land but I was pleased to note in the 6th bullet point in the summary of the Chapter entitled Planning for Right Homes in the Right Places, it states new policies will:*

“...maintain existing strong protections for the Green Belt, and clarify that Green Belt boundaries should be amended only in exceptional circumstances when local authorities can demonstrate that they have fully examined all other reasonable options for meeting their identified housing requirements;”

*Great!*

1. *Bringing Brownfield land back into use is also a highlighted aspiration too.  Interestingly great emphasis is placed on standardising the Needs Assessment for Housing in Local Plans and that the Govt will:*

“make clear that on top of the allowance made for windfall sites, **at least 10% of the sites allocated** **for residential development in local plans** **should be sites of half a hectare or less;”**

1. *There seems to be an attempt to define “exceptional circumstances” for modifying Green Belt Boundaries.  In Para 1.39*:

“Therefore **we propose to amend and add to national policy to make clear that**:

• **authorities should amend Green Belt boundaries only when they can demonstrate that they have examined fully all other reasonable options** for meeting their identifieddevelopment requirements, including:

– making effective use of suitable brownfield sites and the opportunities offered by estate regeneration;

– the potential offered by land which is currently underused, including surplus public sector land where appropriate;

– optimising the proposed density of development; and

– exploring whether other authorities can help to meet some of the identified development requirement.

• **and where land is removed from the Green Belt, local policies should require the impact to be offset** by compensatory improvementsto the environmental quality or accessibility ofremaining Green Belt land. We will also explorewhether higher contributions can be collectedfrom development as a consequence of land beingreleased from the Green Belt.

*I see all this as mixed news. Personally, I welcome the affirmation of Brownfield first & the re-emphasis that Green Belt is still only released in exceptional circumstances.  I also generally welcome the attempt to define exceptional circumstances but as always the generalised nature of White Papers still leaves some ambiguity.*

Philip Plato. 7/2/2017