

# LAND SPHERE

AUGUST 2023

BTF PARTNERSHIP

CHALLOCK | HEATHFIELD | CANTERBURY

SAY HELLO TO OUR NEW  
TEAM MEMBERS AND  
THE EXPERTISE THEY  
BRING

LEVELING UP  
FUNDING  
WITHDRAWN  
FOR THE HOO  
PENINSULAR

ANOTHER GREAT  
YEAR FOR THE  
KENT SHOW



# WELCOMING THE TEAM

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Alex Young joins the rural professional team in Heathfield, East Sussex, as a Planning Consultant and trainee Surveyor. Alex brings with her a wealth of experience, particularly in all things rural planning. Alex has experience in dealing with new farm infrastructure, equestrian matters, and farm diversification through to whole farmyard overhauls for residential schemes.



Government launches new drive to support rural communities as the rural opportunity document is launched on 6th June 2023.

Here are the key points:

1) Communities and businesses in the most remote areas will benefit from better access to wireless networks.

A £7m fund will test ways to bring together satellite, wireless and fixed internet connectivity helping support farmers and tourism businesses to access lightning fast reliable connectivity in even the most remote areas.

2) To boost the supply of new and affordable housing to rent or buy in rural areas. This project will be backed by £2.5m worth of funding.

Government will consult on making it easier for farmers to change their redundant agricultural buildings into family homes by cutting red tape. Planning rules could be changed to provide a more generous threshold delivered through the more streamlined planning process, while providing local authorities with new powers to safeguard against second homes and holiday lets.

The document identifies that the countryside makes up over 90% of the UK's land mass and is home to millions of people and contributes over £250 billion to our economy in England. This is said to be the first step in recognition that rural areas are rich in human and natural potential with strong communities.

This is certainly an ambitious programme and hopefully the government will deliver on Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey's assurance that: 'This government is committed to making sure that the needs of people and businesses in rural areas are at the heart of policymaking.'

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If you feel you have development potential that needs to be unlocked, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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Antony Wilkins has joined as our Property Manager based in our Challock office and has 17 years of residential property management and residential estate management experience, with particular expertise in residential management including landlord and tenant negotiation, rental valuations and compliance.



**Antony has provided a summary of the recent changes to the Renters Reform Bill and how this will impact Landlords and Tenants.**

The Renters (Reform) Bill will improve the system for both the 11 million private renters and 2.3 million landlords in England. The reforms have been developed in consultation with landlord and tenant groups over the past 5 years.

The Renters (Reform) Bill will:

- Abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions and move to a simpler tenancy structure where all assured tenancies are periodic – providing more security for tenants and empowering them to challenge poor practice and unfair rent increases without fear of eviction;

- Introduce more comprehensive possession grounds so landlords can still recover their property (including where they wish to sell their property or move in close family) and to make it easier to repossess properties where tenants are at fault, for example in cases of anti-social behaviour and repeat rent arrears;

- Give tenants the right to request a pet in the property, which the landlord must consider and cannot unreasonably refuse. To support this, landlords will be able to require pet insurance to cover any damage to their property.

- Provide stronger protections against backdoor eviction by ensuring tenants are able to appeal excessively above-market rents which are purely designed to force them out. As now, landlords will still be able to increase rents to market price for their properties and an independent tribunal will make a judgement on this, if needed. To avoid fettering the freedom of the judiciary, the tribunal will continue to be able to determine the actual market rent of a property;

- Introduce a new Private Rented Sector Ombudsman which will provide fair, impartial, and binding resolution to many issues and prove quicker, cheaper, and less adversarial than the court system;

- Create a Privately Rented Property Portal to help landlords understand their legal obligations and demonstrate compliance (giving good landlords confidence in their position), alongside providing better information to tenants to make informed decisions when entering into a tenancy agreement. It will also support local councils – helping them target enforcement activity where it is needed most.

Get in touch to discuss your position as a landlord.

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## CLIFFE WOODS, KENT

- A significant parcel of mixed broadleaf SSSI woodland
- Access on foot or by road
- In all 116.40 acres
- **Guide Price - £795,000**



# BOOK A VIEWING



Tim Crundwell  
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## WESTHOME, EAST SUSSEX

- 6-bedroom bungalow with adjoining paddock
- Versatile use with annexe
- In all 0.95 acres
- **Guide Price - £750,000**



# BTF PARTNERSHIP



Alex Cornwallis  
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## FAWKHAM, KENT

- A successful kennel and livery business with an array of outbuildings, arena and land
- A 4-bedroom semi-detached cottage
- In all 44.90 acres
- **Guide Price - £1,795,000**



# WITHDRAWN 'FUTURE HOO'

## Kent's Hoo peninsular is facing a significant loss in development due to the withdrawal of vital infrastructure funding.

In July, the Department for Leveling Up announced that it would withdraw its £170 million of Housing Infrastructure Funding for Medway Council's 'Future Hoo' proposals, namely, providing road improvements for the expansion of the village of Hoo St Werburgh and delivering a new Passenger Rail Link to the area at Sharnal Street.

Medway's £170 million Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) allocation was part of a wider allocation of over £4 billion across England for local authorities to deliver road and rail infrastructure that would unlock housing. According to Homes England, this will help to unlock up to 324,000 new homes in areas of greatest demand, 28,500 of them in Medway between now and 2040.

Medway Council was relying upon the HIF in order to deliver their emerging Local Plan. Currently, the Council is unable to demonstrate without a local plan to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply, therefore it was hoped that by securing HIF, the local plan would follow.

Medway Local Planning Authority has been wedded to the HIF in order to deliver their 5-year housing plan, this is because the infrastructure proposed would provide the network to support the development of 12,000 new homes and strategic environmental management plans. For landowners, this now means that their land which might have had medium to long term development prospects by virtue of HIF may no longer. Where the local planning authority is unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply, paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (N.P.P.F) sets out the presumption in favor of sustainable development, this means that planning applications for development should be approved unless there are significant reasons not to do so.

One significant reason why a development might not be sustainable and why it might not be permitted is if there is not sufficient infrastructure to support the development, and the increased population and demand that comes with it. Medway Council scraps its emerging local plan, has no housing supply without a local plan, NPPF para. 11 takes effect, HIF funding is set to provide the infrastructure needed around which a housing supply can be built and the 'Future Hoo' project will deliver a new local plan. However, with Home's England withdrawing HIF, the keystone is removed, and 12,000 houses vanish from the housing supply and 28,500 new homes by 2040 suddenly becomes an unlikely achievement.

There has also been a second dimension to the HIF Scheme for landowners and farmers, in order to deliver its proposed infrastructure improvements, Medway Council would be able to use its powers as a Unitary Authority (U.A.) to compulsorily acquire land for its project. Numerous landowners and farmers have been affected by the potential to be compulsory purchased, the Council has already undertaken surveys in various locations which have caused disturbance as well as starting conversations around design refinement and accommodation works for affected parties. Clients have benefited from the advice provided by them and from having instructed an agent to represent them, the impact has been mitigated where possible otherwise just compensation has been pursued.



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# THE KENT SHOW 2023

We enjoyed another great year at the Kent County Show - even the sun made an appearance!

BTF Partnership have a long affiliation with the organisers of the Kent County Show, the Kent County Agricultural Society (KCAS). Two of our team, Alex Cornwallis and Ed Plumptre, are following in the footsteps of their great-grandfathers who were instrumental in the formation of KCAS 100 years ago this year.

We were fortunate enough to partake in an array of activities during this years Kent show. The weekend kicked off with an informative and insightful seminar by podcasters Becca and Lizzie about the hurdles, as well as the benefits, that come with farming in the 21st Century.

Our very own Mike and Jan Bax were also proudly invited to judge several cattle competitions, including Best Presented Cattle - Dairy.

It is vital to continue to promote and support agricultural societies and shows such as this as they are imperative to the future of not only farming, but of our local rural communities and heritage. Without the continued work of the KCAs team and the wider rural Kent community, we would not be able to enjoy such events, so for that we say a huge thank you to a splendid event and we very much look forward to next year!



*Alex Cornwallis and Ed Plumptre next to their great-grandfathers when KCAS was created.*



**SIGN UP TO RECIEVE LAND SPHERE STRAIGHT TO YOUR INBOX**

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