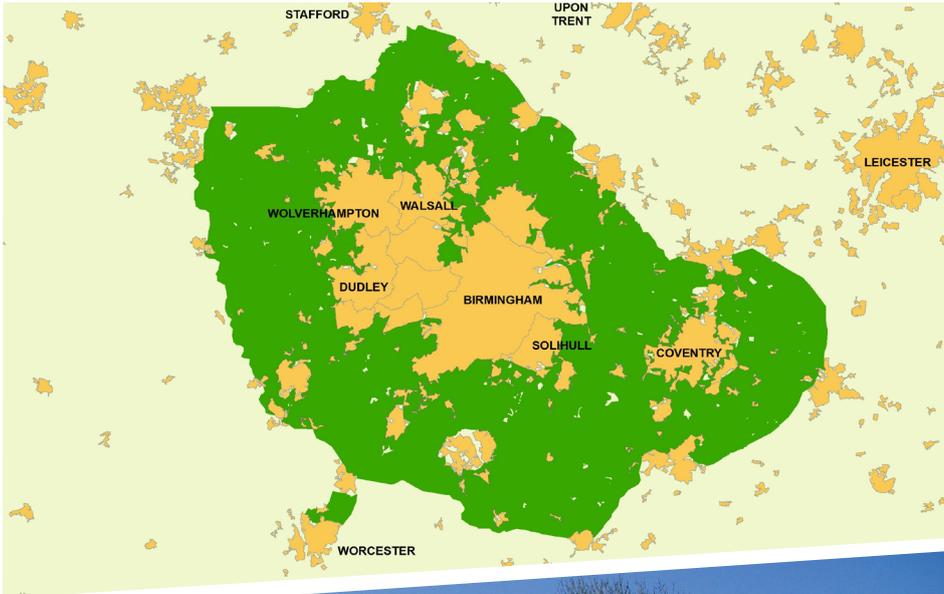


WEST MIDLANDS GREEN BELT

Land Area: 231,291 hectares

(14% of total green belt land and 1.7% of the total land area of England)



What kind of place is the West Midlands Green Belt?

- Designated to prevent the **sprawl of built up areas**, protect character of towns, and **encourage urban regeneration of the West Midlands conurbation**.
- There has been a **59%** increase in the area recorded as designated **Local Nature reserve**
- A relatively high proportion of land is **in agricultural use** and of **best and most versatile** quality
- Most of the landscape is “diverging” or “transforming” in character

Green Belts:

Total area of all Green Belts in England is **1.6 million ha** (13% of England’s total land area)

Green Belt fact sheets covered in this series:

- England
- Avon
- Burton/Swadlincote
- Cambridge
- Gloucester/Cheltenham
- Hampshire/Dorset
- London (Metropolitan)
- North West
- Nottingham/Derby
- Oxford
- South & West Yorkshire
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Tyne & Wear

West Midlands

York

These fact sheets support the reports:

- Nature Conservation and Recreational Opportunities in the Green Belt (2016); with ADAS
- Green Belts: A Greener Future (2010); a joint report with Natural England

Download the reports from www.cpre.org.uk

Nature conservation*



9 priority habitats (important wildlife conservation areas) cover 18,759 ha (8% of the Green Belt area). 15,000 ha of this is over deciduous woodland.

17,514 ha (8%) of **community forest** and 5,877 ha of **ancient woodland**. 11.3% (25,531 ha), compared to 8% nationally, is **broadleaf and mixed woodland**.†

There are 883 ha of National Nature reserves and a further 1,788 ha of **Local Nature Reserves (LNR)**. 4,731 ha (2%) are registered as **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**. The amount of land designated as SSSI and LNR is significantly higher (31% and 59% respectively) than previously estimated.

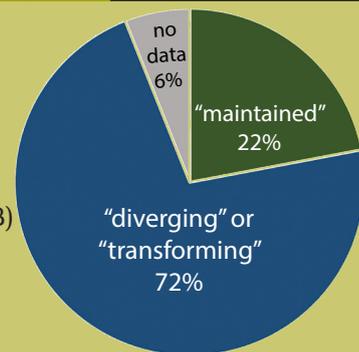
The National Trust owns 2,654 ha, Woodland Trust 340 ha and RSPB 170 ha of land in this Green Belt.

Landscape quality†

5,917 ha (2.6%) of the West Midlands Green Belt coincides with land designated as an **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)**

Pressure from development around major settlements and roads is a main concern, along with loss of grassland and reduction in economically active farm units.

Strengths include **excellent water quality** and reduced agricultural intensity.

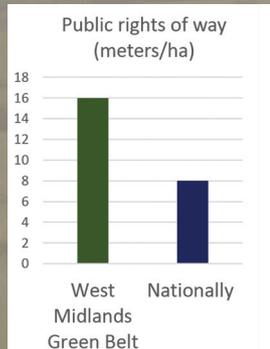


Public access and recreation*



There are **2,206 km of public rights of way** and **132 km of the National Cycle Network**

5,787 ha (2.5%) is Registered (historic) Park and Garden, 3,975 ha of Country Parks and 4,568 ha of open access land.



Agriculture†



19% is Grade 1, Grade 2 or the 'best and most versatile' **agricultural land**. Compared with 17% of land nationally.

72% (160,873 ha) is currently in agricultural use, compared with 71% of land nationally

56% (89,873 ha) of the total agricultural land‡ is subject to Natural England funding 'agri-environment schemes'. (67% of agricultural land nationally, and 53% of all Green Belt agricultural land, is subject to agri-environment schemes).

Green Belt threats snapshot

Local Plans (Source: CPRE, State of the Green Belt 2018)

76,000 houses have been proposed in the Green Belt in local plans, up by 2,500 since 2017. Over 14,000 of these are within the black country. If local plan targets are met, 34.5% of the houses could be affordable. CPRE's 2017 research showed that the Government is set to pay local authorities almost **£462 billion** over 20 years through the New Homes Bonus for the proposed Green Belt development.

Planning Applications (Source: Glenigan, in State of the Green Belt 2018)

4,180 houses have been approved in the West Midlands Green Belt with nearly 1,500 (34%) on greenfield sites. **27%** of homes approved are proposed to be **affordable of social housing** (35% for greenfield sites).

*These figures are from CPRE's report with ADAS, *Nature Conservation and Recreational Opportunities in the Green Belt* (2016)

† These figures are from CPRE and Natural England's report *Green Belt: A Greener Future* (2010)

‡ Note that the total for agricultural land on which the percentage covered by agri-environment schemes is based is higher than the total for agricultural land currently in use. This is because a small area of land classed as 'agricultural' is not currently in use.