

The benefits

The provision of housing within a village not only provides much needed homes, but also promotes the sustainability of the area; young people can remain in their village and will be using the local shop, post office, schools and public transport. These facilities and services might otherwise be lost to the community if the population of the village is in decline.

New housing developments can help stop a village stagnating; young families help local businesses to thrive, and contribute to the vitality of the area.



What agencies are involved in the process?

The District Council, RSLs (registered social landlords), the Parish Council, Action in rural Sussex, Rural Housing Enablers.

If you would like further information on the provision of affordable housing in your parish please contact your rural housing enabler:

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Affordable rural housing

Provision of affordable housing in rural areas – everybody is talking about it, but...

- what is it?
- why is it needed?
- who is eligible?
- where will it be provided?

What is it?

Affordable housing can be either housing for rent or housing for purchase in a subsidised form – for example shared ownership with a housing association.

Why?

The need for housing in villages is due to the lack of affordable accommodation for local people and essential workers.

- House prices have far outstripped the rise in local incomes making it impossible for young people to purchase homes in the area they were brought up in.
- There is a shortage of accommodation to rent at affordable prices due to properties having been purchased under the right to buy. The number of properties available for letting has been decreasing over the years and continues to decrease.
- Demand for accommodation has generally increased as a result of more couples separating and divorcing, more young people setting up home on their own and people living longer in their own homes.

Who?

The provision of affordable houses in the villages is aimed to help:

- Young people who have lived in the area all their lives and want to stay in the village but cannot afford to buy a home there.
- People who have had to move away from the area to obtain accommodation but would like to move back to be near friends and relatives.
- Older people who require smaller accommodation and wish to stay in the village.
- Essential workers with employment in the area; many teachers, nurses etc. do not earn enough to be able to purchase a home on the open market.

Where?

The housing should be within the village limits and close to local facilities – i.e. the school, village shop etc.

- Local planning authorities can now allocate small sites solely for affordable housing, which must meet the needs of essential workers and local people in perpetuity.
- An Exception Site, land not normally permitted for housing, on which a housing association develops a small scheme for rent and/or buy for local people who cannot afford current market housing prices.
- Use of empty homes, where homes have remained empty for a period of 6 months or more, negotiations can take place with the owner to make the property available to let to a local person at an affordable rent.
- The inclusion of affordable housing on sites that have been acquired by private developers.
- The release of unused accommodation above shops.

It is usually advocated that developments should be small, in keeping with the character of the village, provide housing for local people and promote the sustainability of the village.

