

Funding the development

The Housing Association will make a bid to the Housing Corporation for funding for the development.

Applying for planning permission

The housing association or registered social landlord will apply to the District Council for planning permission. Ensure the parish council and local community are kept informed and are allowed to comment on the plans prior to submission.

Selecting the tenants

If the site being developed is an Exception Site there will be an obligation for local people to be housed. Details of the definition of local people are set out in the Local Plan held by the Local Authority.

Build the houses

Emphasise that there should be a minimum of disturbance and nuisance to existing residents during the construction process.



How do we find out more?

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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Action in rural Sussex



Affordable rural housing
A guide for parish councils

This is a brief outline of the procedures that will be necessary when undertaking an affordable housing scheme

Assessing the housing need in the area

- The district council housing waiting list will give some indication of the level of need in the area, but there may be hidden needs, young people from the locality may not have registered believing that there was no possibility of being re-housed in the area.
- The local authority may have carried out a district wide housing needs survey which might include surveys for individual parishes. Ensure that the information is up to date and relevant to the parish.
- A parish housing survey based on a questionnaire to all residents, rural housing enablers can help with the compilation of the survey and analysis of the results.
- Local registers of housing need, kept by the parishes.
- Anyone with a housing need within the village should always be encouraged to register their interest on the District Councils Housing Register.

Consulting the villagers

Having established that there is a need for housing in the parish, the next step is to consult the local community and keep them informed of any developments. A drop in day could be arranged to provide the local community with information about affordable housing and the benefits it will bring to the village. These days can also be used to allay any fears and concerns they might have. Many residents will find this an easier way of obtaining information than attending a public meeting which could be daunting. Other benefits of drop-in days are that:

- Local landowners may bring forward sites for consideration in confidence.
- Local residents can be kept informed so that there is no confusion or room for rumour-mongering.
- Possibility of collecting names of those in housing need to add to the waiting list.

Selecting a site

Ideally the site should be within walking distance of the local facilities i.e. school, shop, pub, church, village hall etc.

The exception site policy is an appropriate resource for small villages as it allows sites that would not normally be released for development to be used for affordable housing for local people in perpetuity. There are pitfalls with the exception site policy, below are some of them:

- Landowners believe that it is worth hanging on to the site in the hope that it will become part of the mainstream development plan.
- The price of the land must be kept low in order to maintain the affordability of the homes.
- Local opposition to the idea of new developments

Planning policy now requires that a proportion of most housing sites are developed as affordable housing.

Windfall sites – any site within the settlement policy area can be considered for affordable housing development.

The **local planning department** is always willing to give advice on the suitability of sites and should be consulted at the earliest opportunity.

Choosing a developer

The District Council will be able to give advice on a suitable Housing Association to take the project forward.

The Parish Council should be involved during the design stage of the development and should ask the association about their housing management policies i.e. the implementation of tenancy conditions once the development is completed.

