

LDC Housing Working Party

To consider the present and future needs of the District for Affordable Housing.

Report to HWG meeting: 13 October 2008

1. We were asked to consider the present and future needs of the District for Affordable Housing. Information on current and future need is critical evidence that can be used to inform affordable housing policy and site by site negotiations.
2. In order to assess the current and future needs of the district for affordable housing a number of information sources were interrogated. These included:
 - Housing Needs Survey 2005
 - Housing Market Assessment 2008
 - Lewes District Council Housing Register 2007-2008
 - Affordable housing developments by unit size 2003/2004 to 2007/2008
 - Planned affordable housing development by unit size 2008/2009 to 2009/2010
 - Wivelsfield Parish Housing Needs Survey 2007
 - Barcombe Parish Housing Needs Survey 2007
3. A summary of key points from these sources is attached as Appendix A.

Conclusions

- Overriding need is for social rented accommodation and this needs to be our priority.
- Whilst there is need across the district, there are also recognised areas of priority. However, we cannot ignore the needs and opportunities that arise in all areas.
- We recognise both urban and rural communities and that the needs of both communities need to be addressed.
- The size of units provided should be based on; the evidence of need, current and planned stock, turnover of stock, and should be negotiated on a site by site basis.
- There is recognition of the need to provide family sized accommodation in order to promote sustainable communities, enable down or up sizing through the stock.
- Large concentrations of small units in one location can have negative management implications.

Recommendations

- Future policy to include target for affordable rented accommodation - 75%
- Further consideration will need to be given to specifying geographical areas for priority.
- Consideration should be given to including a rural target for affordable housing.
- Size of units should not be specified in policy (other than to say a mix is required) but should be negotiated on a site by site basis.
- Future policy should make reference to the need for affordable family sized housing.
- Future policy should not allow for large concentrations of 1 bed units.