

Rural Housing

Newsletter Briefing
July 2020



Housing is vital for the survival of rural communities and services.

Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils are committed to increasing the amount of affordable housing in rural areas.

In May 2020, a new Housing Strategy and Enabling Team was established to lead on key housing related strategies and to ensure a proactive approach to the delivery of new affordable housing across both districts.

This work of the team will include;

- Supporting continuous market engagement with developers and housing providers
- Bringing together housing, planning, economic development and regeneration work together to influence the housing market
- Funding bids to Homes England to increase the delivery of affordable homes
- Ensuring a robust pipeline of housing developments are planned for the future
- Researching and understanding the needs of the district to ensure new affordable housing meets the needs

In 2020, the team will set up a new Rural Affordable Housing Partnership including Registered Providers to improve the way we work together towards the delivery of new affordable housing in rural areas which meets identified housing needs whilst improving the sustainability credentials of new affordable homes.

We will also recruit a Rural Housing Enabler who will develop a programme of visits to Parish Councils to unlock

smaller pockets of land to encourage the development of affordable housing in local parishes. It is vital to ensure that housing is available for those people who wish to remain in the village or parish they were bought up in and for older people looking to downsize to smaller properties. This means people can remain close to their families and support networks and benefit from the support this often provides.

The Housing Strategy and Enabling Team can be contacted by emailing housingstrategyandenabling@wychavon.gov.uk

Community Led Housing

Community led housing is developed and/or managed by local people or local agencies who are not making private profit.

There are various organisational structures that can be adopted but governance should be overseen by people who either live or work in the area that will benefit.

Community led housing schemes are increasingly being recognised as a way to boost affordable housing supply, have a positive social impact and put communities at the heart of decision making.

Worcestershire Community Led Housing Hub

Wychavon and Malvern Council's have been successful in gaining funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to set up a Community Led Housing Hub in partnership with Wyre Forest District Council and Redditch Co-operative Homes.

The aim of the hub is to increase the delivery of Community Led Housing schemes across Worcestershire through community engagement events, support, consultancy and training provided to CLH groups and other stakeholders in Worcestershire.

Community Led Housing Projects

Lion and Lamb Cohousing (Stock and Bradley Green Parish)

A development to provide 8 Full Market Price and 2 Shared ownership homes. The site was identified as an unfinished project on a former public house site in the village of Bradley Green. Planning permission had already been granted and foundations and services had been laid.

The original concept was to provide rural accommodation for rural people, semi-retired or retired, who are used to rural living and would like to downsize and remain in a village setting rather than move to an urban property or retirement complex. The development will offer residents opportunities to get involved in many activities such as but not limited to, horticulture in the cottage garden and greenhouse, animal husbandry including pets, literature groups in the communal Library and various activities within the outdoor amenity spaces such as the allotments.

WDC are supporting the landowner to form a group of people to run this as a Cohousing Scheme, helping them to engage with interested parties to take this project forward and secure suitable occupants for the 2 shared ownership properties. We will use this as a platform to explore future Cohousing schemes across Wychavon and Malvern Hills by building a database of people who are interested in this type of living.



Clifton upon Teme

The Clifton upon Teme CLH group is now receiving support from the Worcestershire Community Led Housing Hub and Community First to bring forward their plans. Further detail will be provided over the coming months.

The group are looking at purpose-built apartment accommodation which would allow local older residents to live independent lives but with the knowledge that other people in the community are close at hand.

A small steering group has been set up and a housing needs survey in the village has been carried out which revealed that 30 people currently resident would be interested in using such accommodation.

If you are interested in Community Led Housing, please email the team at: housingstrategyandenabling@wychavon.gov.uk

2019- 20 Affordable Housing Delivery

Wychavon 2019-20 Target	275
Wychavon 2019-20 Delivery	299
Malvern Hills 2019-20 Target	225
Malvern Hills 2019-20 Delivery	202

Of those delivered in Wychavon (31.1%) were in rural locations, including: Pinvin, Bevere, Drakes Broughton and Sedgeberrow.

Those delivered in Malvern Hills, (49.3%) were in rural locations including: Alfrick, Leigh and Bransford, Clifton upon Teme, Hallow, Rushwick, Upton upon Severn, Powick and Welland.

Starting in April 2020, we have a new five year plan to deliver 1,000 new affordable homes in Wychavon and 550 new affordable homes in Malvern Hills.

Housing Register

Our housing register gives priority to those in housing need who have a local connection. To fulfil these criteria the applicant should have:

Residence: Lived in the parish by choice for 6 out of the last 12 months or 3 out of the last 5 years; or

Family: Close family (mother, father, sibling, adult son or daughter) living in the parish by choice for at least the previous five years; or

Employment: Permanent paid employment in the parish; or

Other: A local connection to the parish as a result of special circumstances subject to approval by the Housing Services Manager.

Our Housing Options Team are currently developing a new software package for the South Worcestershire Districts (Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon Councils). This is currently at a customer consultation, and software development stage. It is hoped that this system will go live in September 2020.

Registered Provider Case Studies

Manor Road, Middle Littleton

Rooftop Housing Group owns many Airey Houses on Manor Road, Middle Littleton. These were acquired through the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) from Wychavon in 1994. Designed and built after the Second World War by Sir Edwin Airey of Leeds, these prefabricated houses consist of concrete columns, reinforced with metal tubing, recycled it is said from military vehicles. A series of shiplap style concrete panels form the distinctive exterior. Manufactured off site, they could be erected quickly with relatively unskilled labour as a way to ease the post war housing shortage. These houses were classified as defective by the Secretary of State under Part XVI of the Housing Act 1985. It is impossible to raise a mortgage on an Airey House without specialist refurbishment works taking place.

The structural integrity of all Airey Properties is checked every 3 years to ensure that they are fit for habitation. Some of the Airey Houses on Manor Road have been sold through the right to buy and on the open market over the last 25 years. Rooftop have however, maintained a straight run of 10 homes. They have a large floor area and stand on large plots and therefore they have been favoured by tenants due to the amount of living space they provide. However, the EPC rating of the existing properties range from E to G and residents note that they are expensive to heat, draughty and prone to damp.

Rooftop has planning permission to demolish the 10no. Airey Houses on Manor Road and replace with 21no. brand new homes to local housing need. The housing mix is as follows:

Social Rent
1 x 2B4P House
1 x 2B3P Bungalow
5 x 3B5P House
2 x 4B7P House
1 x 6B10P House
1 x 2B3P Bungalows

Affordable Rent
8 x 1B2P Maisonette

Shared Ownership
1 x 2B4P House
1 x 3B5P House
1 x 2B3P Bungalow

Rooftop has already held three resident consultation events to explain to their customers the extent of their proposals and understand their housing needs. Rooftop has been assisted in the consultation process by Planning for Real with involvement from Wychavon District Council's Community Led Housing Enabler. Responses from Rooftop customers, the Parish and public have been broadly positive and many are excited about the prospect of a brand new home.

These new homes will be manufactured off-site by LoCal homes using a Timber Frame product providing a low carbon system. It uses specialist insulation and a range of innovative techniques to manufacture a sustainable, environmentally conscious, low carbon alternative to traditional brick-built structures. LoCaL Homes achieves an EPC rating of B as standard which will plan to enhance to EPC A with the installation of PV Panels. The utility costs of a LoCal Home with PV panels is expected to be circa £315 per annum.

For further information about LoCal Homes, please [click here](#).

Tibberton Community Land Trust (CLT)

Wychavon District Council became involved with Tibberton CLT at it's inception in 2014. The Trust was set up to provide and maintain a village hall and to improve and maintain other public amenities for the benefit of the community. Tibberton CLT identified that the village was in need of affordable homes for local people to rent who were priced out of the market. Wychavon District Council provided land to Tibberton Community Land Trust which was then leased to Rooftop Housing Group who was appointed by the Trust to deliver 10 affordable homes as well as a parcel of land sold by the council to Rooftop Housing Group for 4 market homes. Rooftop has paid £200,000 for the lease in respect of the affordable housing and £240,000 for the land for the market homes. These monies are being held by Wychavon District Council as contribution towards the development of the new village hall. A site has also been provided by the council adjacent for the provision of allotments. The homes on this development are now fully occupied.

The site has provided:
1x 1 bed bungalow
2x 1 bed houses
2x 2 bed bungalows
3x 2 bed houses
2x 3 bed houses

Tibberton Community Land Trust



Blakes Hill, North Littleton

A unique rural development by Rooftop Housing Group, built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6.

What does Code for Sustainable Homes mean for Blakes Hill?

The sustainability rating system – The Code for Sustainable Homes has been developed to enable a step change in sustainable building practice for new homes. The Code uses a sustainability rating system indicates by stars to communicate the overall sustainability performance of a home. A home can achieve a sustainability rating from one (*) to six (*****) stars depending on the extent to which it has achieved Code standards. One star is the entry level which is above the building regulations and six stars is the highest level reflecting exemplar development in sustainability terms. Blakes Hill has achieved a six star rating.

A set of sustainable design principles – The Code measures the sustainability of a home against design categories, rating the 'whole home' as a complete package. The design categories included within the Code are; energy/CO₂ emissions, water consumption, materials, surface water run-off, waste, pollution, health and well-

being, management and ecology. Blakes Hill has achieved the highest points available in five of the nine categories.



Great Witley scheme by Platform Housing Group



Rural Exception Sites

Rural exception sites present a good opportunity to develop affordable homes on sites which would normally not be considered. See below for some examples:

Wychavon

Wychbold (Dodderhill Parish): Full planning permission granted for 33 affordable dwellings, comprising of a mix of tenures including social rented, affordable rented and shared ownership.

Malvern

Great Witley: Outline application with all matters (except access) reserved for a residential development of 12 affordable dwellings and associated works - allowed at appeal.

This is one of Platform Housing Groups rural developments.

The land was previously owned by a local family and it was used for horse grazing. The family approached Jessup Brothers Ltd and Platform Housing Group as they were keen on selling the land to developers to provide more housing to the local community. This development has very recently completed and has provided 9 rented

properties and 3 shared ownership – a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes.

The site is located next door to The Hundred House which is a grade 2 listed building. The building dates back to the 18th Century and was built by Lord Foley who was the owner of Witley Court. Over the years it has been used as a collecting house, used for local dances and sporting events. In 1904 the building was converted into private apartments and used as a hotel, one night would have cost 3 shillings. The property was sold in 2013 and is now currently under development..

For more information on Rural Housing visit
[www.wychavon.gov.uk/housing/
affordable-housing](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/housing/affordable-housing)

Email:
housingstrategyandenabling@wychavon.gov.uk

