

Meeting Rural Housing Needs The contribution of Rural Exception Sites

Martin Hutchings, Rural Housing Enabler Gloucestershire Rural Community Council



What is a Rural Exception Site?

NPPF February 2019 Paragraph 77.

Local planning authority should support the provision of affordable housing to meet identified local needs.

What is affordable housing? Defined by NPPF Annex 2: Glossary.





How do we work with LPAs and rural communities to address local needs?

- Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership – who are its members? And what are its aims?
- Taking a new strategy approach to parish Housing Needs Surveys.
- What role does GRCC play in the Partnership?





Key steps to delivering a RES

- Start a conversation with parish council/ local group
- Identification of local housing needs
- Identification of potential sites & seek LPA's comments
- Identification of development funding
- Negotiation and acquisition of land
- Undertaking pre-application with LPA
- Public consultation followed by planning application
- Procurement of build contract
- Marketing and allocation
- Projects can and often do take in excess 4 years from housing needs survey to occupation!





Impact of NPPF and emergence of Neighbourhood Development Plans on delivering Rural Exception Sites

- Changes made to the NPPF since its introduction in 2012 have resulted in a greater number Rural Exception Sites including market housing.
- Market housing who benefits? Is it the landowner, the developer, or the wider community?
- NDPs process has brought to the attention to local communities the housing needs that exist within their community.
- An increased awareness by communities of affordable housing, including its delivery and impact on the community as a whole.
- NDPs have led to the community's identification of potential rural exception sites for affordable housing e.g. Berry Hill, Forest of Dean.





Since 2012 the GRHP has delivered in excess of 350 affordable homes on 26 rural exception sites in Gloucestershire.