

Findings of the Combe Martin Housing Needs Survey January 2006

From the survey forms returned, 56 households stated that they were in affordable housing need and filled out Part Two of the survey form.

Assessment of Part Two survey forms indicates that 31 households are in local affordable housing need. They comply with the Local Connection Criteria for North Devon District Council and currently satisfy the criteria for being in affordable housing need.

When considering the size/type of affordable housing which may be required within the parish, it is important to take into account the criteria which would be applied both by the local authority and/or a housing association when allocating such properties. It must be remembered that this Housing Needs Survey represents a snapshot in time. Personal circumstances are constantly evolving and any future development should take account of this.

The current mix suggests that there are **28 households who can afford to rent at an affordable level (most likely through a housing association) and 3 households that are interested and could afford Shared Ownership/Low Cost Home Ownership properties.** Although many households wanted to enter into some form of affordable home ownership, most that expressed an interest could not raise more than £45,000 therefore were quite unlikely to be able to achieve this at the present time. The breakdown is as follows:

5 x 1 bed for rent (including 2 households that need accommodation on one level)

8 x 1 or 2 bed for rent

8 x 2 bed for rent (including 2 households that need accommodation on one level)

4 x 3 bed for rent

2 x 3 or 4 bed for rent

1 x 4 bed for rent

1 x 2 bed for Shared Ownership/Low Cost Home Ownership

2 x 3 bed for Shared Ownership/Low Cost Home Ownership (1 household would only consider a self build project)

Despite there being 31 qualifying households at the moment, it is not generally considered sustainable to build a house per household as the community's needs may change and it is important that these houses are filled, not only in the first instance, but remain occupied by local people in affordable housing need in the future. Therefore I recommend that about 15 properties would be a sufficient amount of housing to satisfy the likely ongoing need in the long term. It is our experience that not all those who have filled out a form may come forward for affordable housing that may be developed and that circumstances may have changed in the interim period. It is important to ensure, where possible, that any new affordable housing is going to meet the current and on-going needs of the community.

From the findings of the surveys the mix of housing could possibly be 1 or 2 Shared Ownership/Low Cost Home Ownership properties of either 2 or 3 bedroom size, which would depend upon further investigation of the household's finances. It is suggested that 13 or 14 rental properties of mainly two to three bedrooms with one or two four bedroom properties would help to address some of the affordable housing need within this parish. The rental properties would need to be at an affordable rent level.