



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset. TA22 9HL

Contacts: Colin Savage, Rural Housing Enabler ☎ 01398 322249

Diane Blackman, Rural Housing Project Assistant ☎ 01398 322245

E-mail: cbsavage@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

Website address: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/index/living_in/affordable-housing.htm

EAST AND WEST WORLINGTON

Parish Housing Needs Survey Report

March 2009

RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

The Rural Housing Project has been running since 2002 and is a partnership between Exmoor National Park Authority, North Devon Council, West Somerset Council, Falcon Rural Housing, Hastoe Housing Association, North Devon Homes Ltd and Magna Housing Association. It has been working hard to address the shortage of affordable housing within a predominantly rural area. The area covered by the project displays an extreme disparity between incomes and house prices, which makes it hard for many to gain secure footing within the housing market.

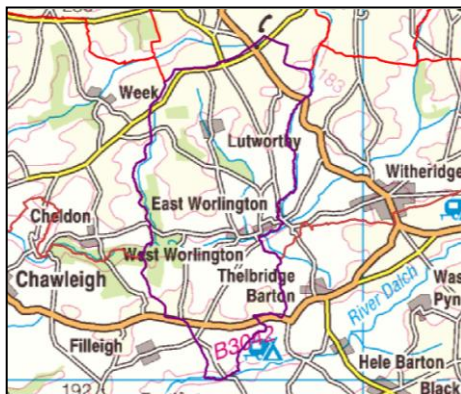
The Rural Housing Project is designed to help promote and deliver affordable rural housing strategically across the project area and helps deliver Exmoor National Park housing policies within the Park. This is being achieved by informing people about affordable rural housing, providing help and advice, carrying out research at a parish level to assess the affordable housing need and bringing together the community and various partners to help deliver housing where it is needed.

One of the tasks for the project is to work with the Parish Council and the local community to assist them in carrying out a housing needs survey, in order to identify whether there is a need for affordable housing for local people in the parish.

INTRODUCTION

The Parish

East Worlington, an agricultural parish covering 8.29 square miles¹, is in the Little Dart valley 10 miles south east of South Molton and 15 miles north west of Crediton in Devon. The parish includes the hamlets of East and West Worlington², and Lutworthy. There is a primary school in East Worlington and churches at East and West Worlington, but the nearest shops and pubs are just outside the parish.



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Purpose of the Survey

The purpose of the parish housing needs survey is to identify the general level of local affordable housing need within the parish of East Worlington. This report provides an analysis of the local affordable housing need identified within the parish, which can be used to gauge the level of housing that may need to be delivered.

In 2007 the Parish Council agreed to the formation of a Parish Plan and commissioned a Parish Plan Steering Group to carry out this task. The Rural Housing Enabler was asked by this group to prepare a survey for distribution as Part Three of the Parish Plan questionnaire; Parts One and Two of the questionnaire provide background information and general trends regarding the parish, and personal viewpoints; Part Three is completed by those who think they have a need to move and provides more in depth information, which can be used to help assess whether the respondent is in need of affordable housing.

The survey forms were distributed in the summer of 2008 to all households in East and West Worlington. Part Three survey forms were then made available for anyone likely to have a local affordable housing need in the next five years. A total of 81 responses were received and eight Part Three forms indicating a need for affordable housing.

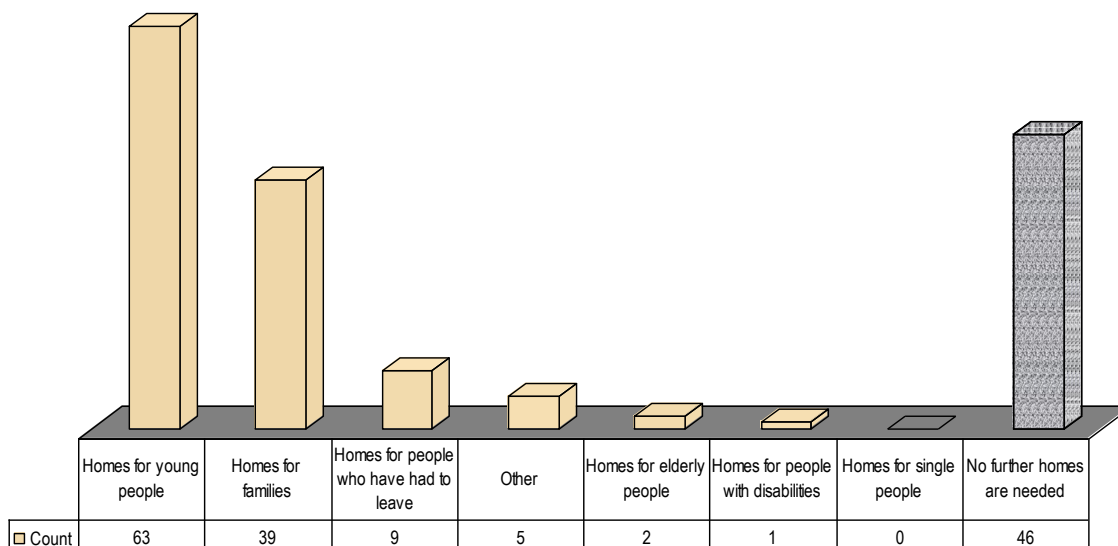
It is important to note that this survey attempts to show general trends and it is not our intention to identify particular individuals or families.

¹ Source: Office for National Statistics

² Prior to 1931 West Worlington was a separate parish

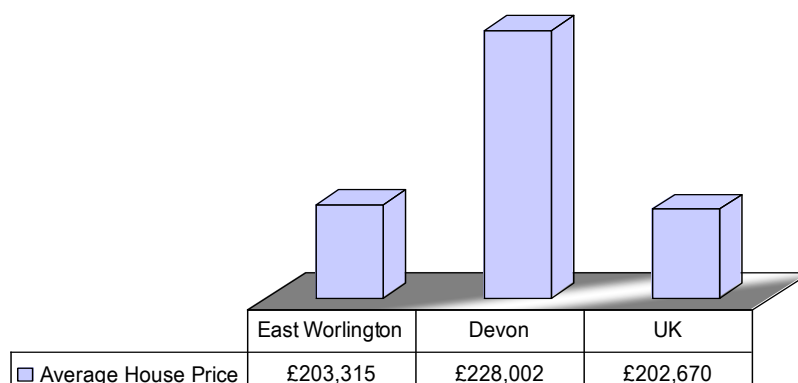
Key Findings

- The population is relatively stable, with 58% of respondents having lived in the parish for ten years or more.
- There is an even spread between males (48%) and females (52%).
- There are 8 households assessed as being in local affordable housing need.
- The majority of people (72%) felt there was a need for new affordable housing provision in the parish, broken down into the following categories:



Parish Context And Housing Market

It is important to bear in mind that the following figures and charts represent a snapshot in time. The housing market is in a constant state of flux and circumstances can change. House prices in East Worlington are slightly higher than the national average but slightly lower than the average for the county of Devon as a whole.³ The most readily available type of property in the area is detached houses. The majority of property in this area is owner occupied.

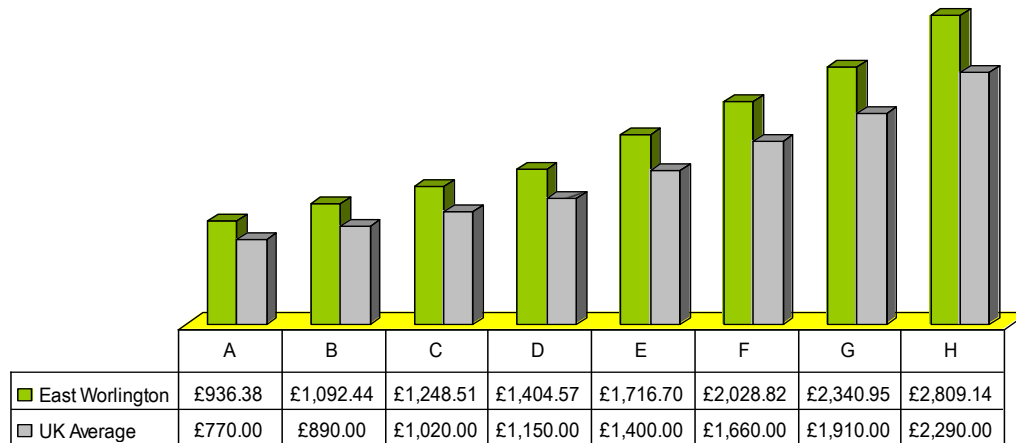


In February 2009 there were eight homes for sale, five of which were farms⁴. Prices ranged from £210,000 to £395,000 (houses) and £975,000 to £1,970,000 (farms/farmhouses).

³ January 2009 Land Registry figures

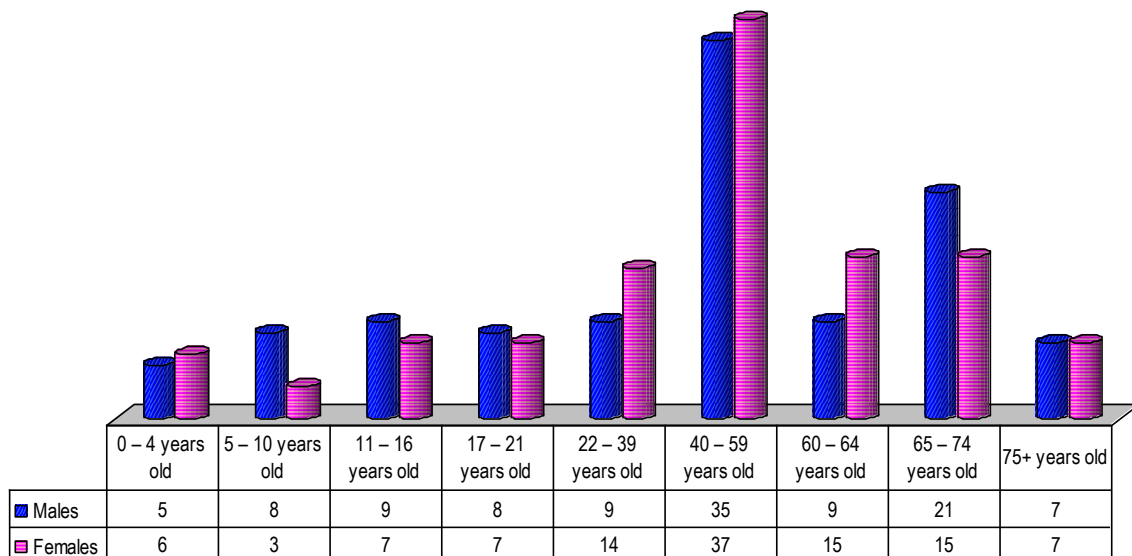
⁴ www.mouseprice.com

Council tax levels in East Worlington are higher than the UK national average, as follows:



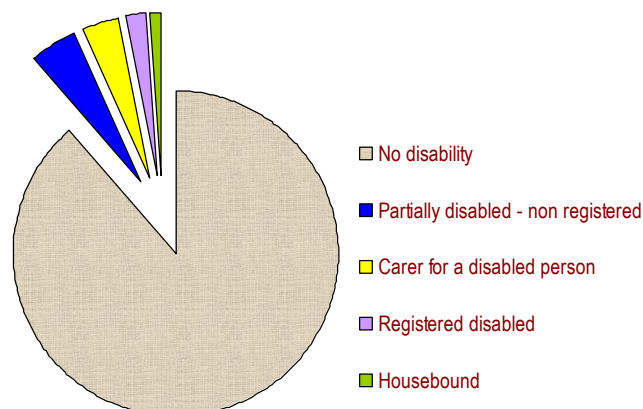
Population

According to the Census of 2001, there were 241 people living in the parish in 105 dwellings. The following chart profiles the population in each age bracket in the parish:



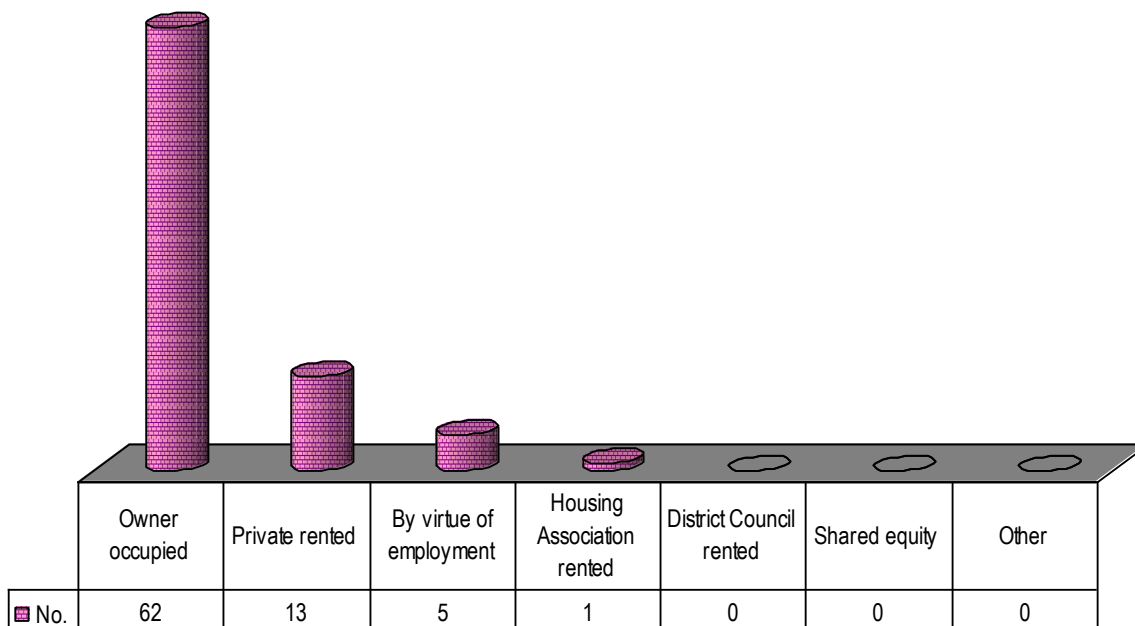
Disability

84% of households reported no disability. Of those who had a disability, two were housebound, 3 registered disabled, 8 partially disabled (non-registered) and six respondents were caring for a disabled person.



Tenure

The following chart provides a tenure profile for the parish. 76.5% of households who responded to our survey were owner occupied.



HOUSING NEEDS

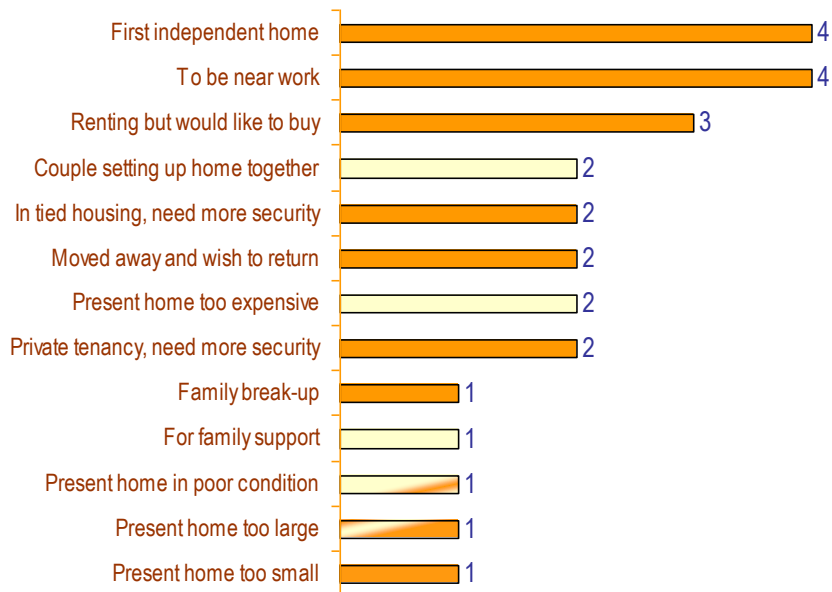
Local Connections

It is intended that any affordable homes delivered will be for people living or working in East Worlington parish, or an adjoining one, or for those who can show that they have a long-term connection with the area. Only one household did not have anyone fitting these criteria. Full results as follows:

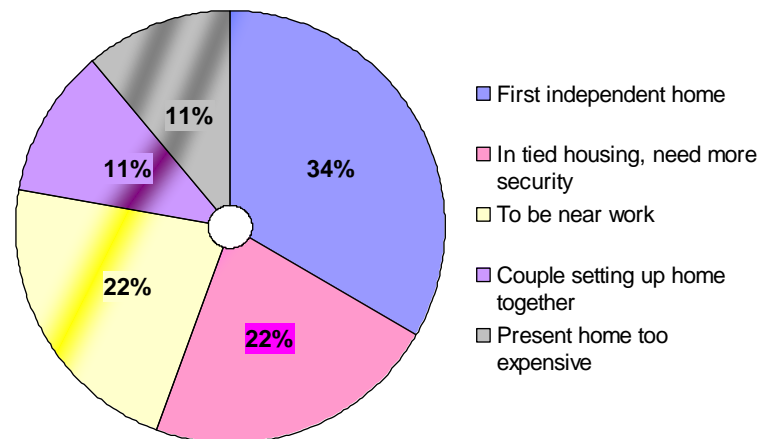
	Respondent:							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Have you lived in East Worlington Parish or an adjoining parish continuously for the last 5 years?	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓
Have you worked in East Worlington Parish or an adjoining parish continuously for the last 5 years or do you provide services of importance to the local community and live closer to your work? (agriculture, emergency services, health care, social work, teacher).	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
Have you moved away but have strong established and continuous links with the locality by reason of birth or family and still have a parent or guardian living here?	✓	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x
Do you know someone who has a strong link with East Worlington parish who would like to move back?	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	x

Identifying Housing Need

The survey asked respondents to identify the reasons why they need to move. Results show diverse reasons, as follows:

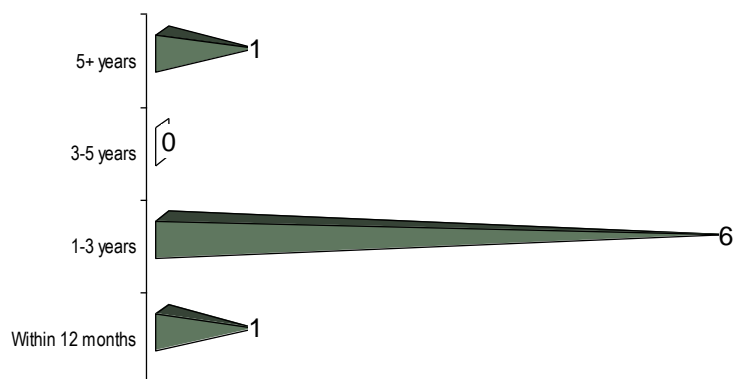


Of these, the main reasons were:



Urgency

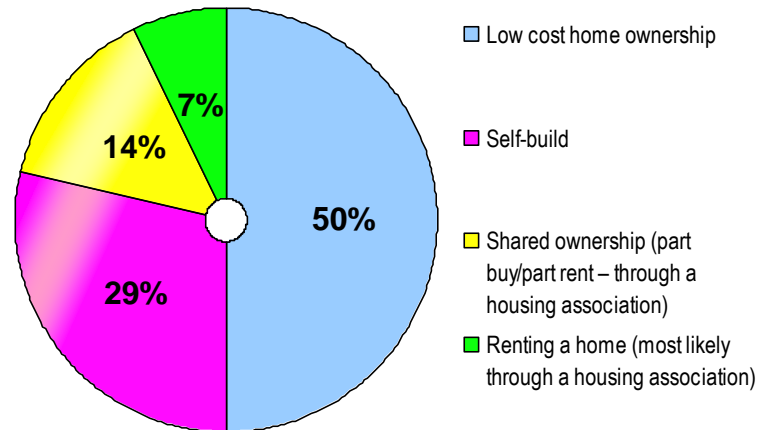
Timescales given for need to move showed most people would have 1-3 years to find alternative accommodation:



Three households felt able to remain in their present home if alterations, adaptations or support were to be provided, and three did not.

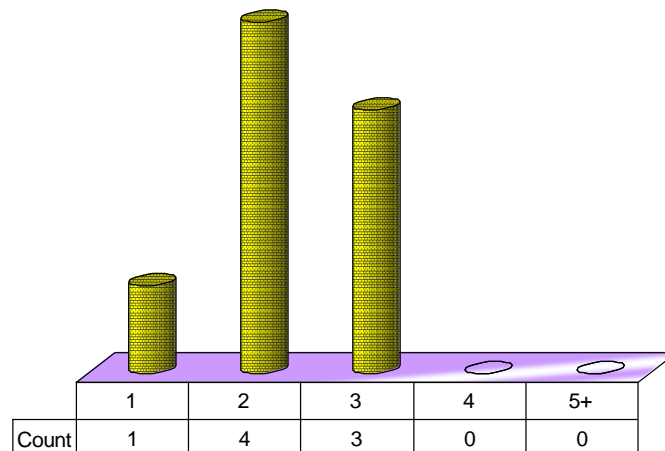
Tenure

Depending on affordability, interest was expressed in the following forms of tenure, by far the greatest interest being expressed in low cost home ownership:-



Size

The survey asked how many bedrooms would be needed, with the results showing no requirement for accommodation larger than three bedrooms:

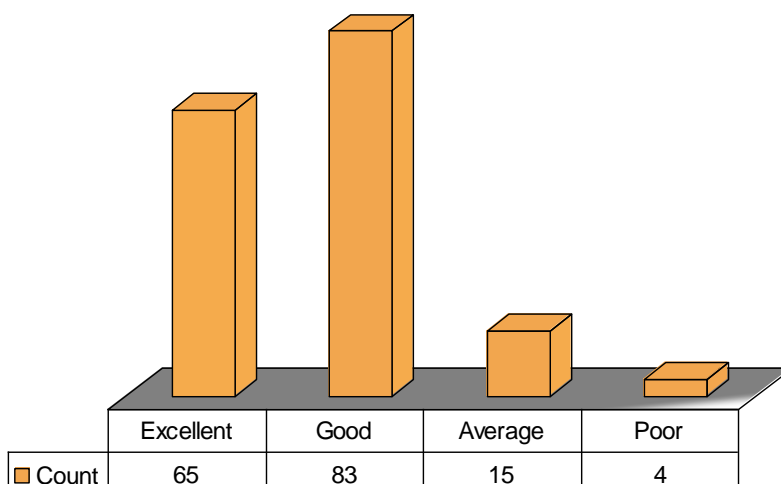


Choice of Location

Given the choice of local parishes, respondents put into order of priority where they would need to live. East Worlington parish was by far the most preferred location.

	1 st choice	2 nd choice	3 rd choice	4 th choice	5 th choice
East Worlington Parish	7				
Chulmleigh Parish		2	1		
Meshaw Parish		1	2		1
Witheridge Parish		3		1	
Crediton			1		
Chawleigh			1		
Other mid-Devon				1	1

The survey asked how people rated East Worlington parish as a community and in response 89% felt it was good to excellent.



RHE Recommendations

Eight Part 3 forms were returned from people believing themselves to be in affordable housing need. All eight households appear to be in housing need, but one household did not meet the local connection criteria set out in the North Devon Council Local Plan. They cannot be considered for new housing on an Exception Site, which would be restricted to those meeting those local connection criteria.

One household indicate that they need housing in 5 years or more, demonstrating a longer term need for affordable housing if it is provided. All the other households require housing in the next three years.

Three of the households in need were young single people or couples looking to set up home for the first time. It is not normal practice to provide housing for all people in this category as some of them are likely to move elsewhere.

Most of the households identified as in housing need aspired to some form of low cost home ownership, but not all are in a financial position to afford it. A deposit of 10-20% of the purchase price, plus a mortgage, are required for this form of tenure.

The seven households meeting the local connection criteria require the following housing:-

House Type	Rented	Affordable Home Ownership
2 beds	2	2
3 beds	1	2

It is recommended that up to four affordable homes be provided. This could be rented or low cost home ownership, with the potential demand being there for two homes of each tenure.

House Type	Rented	Affordable Home Ownership
2 bed 4 person	1	1
3 bed 5 person	1	1

The preference of the Rural Housing Project is to see affordable rented housing provided, at low rent levels such as those set by the Homes and Communities Agency for housing associations and other Registered Social Landlords. This form of housing provides for those in greatest need, and there is always a demand for it.

Building affordable home ownership for sale is a potentially risky option, especially in the current market. Several of those expressing an interest in this option also indicated an interest in self-build. Supporting such individual initiatives may be the most secure way of meeting this type of need. This could be done by providing serviced self-build plots to be developed by individuals when they are in a position to do so, or by supporting them through the planning process if they identify an opportunity for a new build exception site, or for the conversion of an existing building. The Rural Housing Project is able to provide some support for individuals following these routes.

Colin Savage
Rural Housing Enabler
12/9/2008



East Worlington: Between Horseford and Blagrove

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THE RURAL SETTLEMENTS

3.29 In addition to the larger settlements identified above, North Devon contains a considerable number of smaller settlements, some of which act as a focal point, albeit for a more immediate local community. Some of these settlements function collectively as a network by sharing their community facilities. Providing limited growth in selected rural settlements will help support services that are vulnerable to closure and meet the needs of the local population ensuring their communities remain vibrant and healthy. For the purposes of this Plan, the 'rural settlements' are identified as follows:-

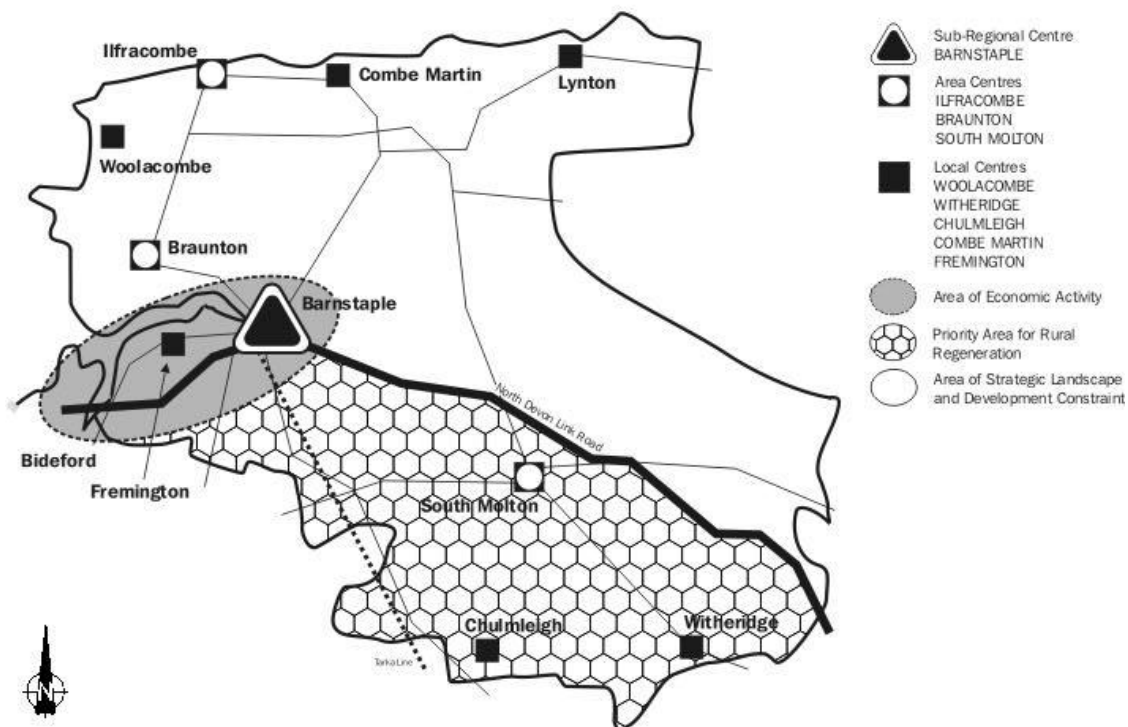
Alswear, Brayford, Chittlehamholt, East Anstey, East Worlington, Filleigh, Kentisbury Ford, Knowstone, Lower Lovacott, Meshaw, Molland, Muddiford/Milltown, Newton Tracey, Shirwell, Stoke Rivers, Tawstock, Umberleigh, West Buckland and Westleigh.

3.30 The identification of the above rural settlements have been selected on the following basis :-

- They contain or are accessible to a basic level of services and facilities including a school and shop either individually or collectively as a network of settlements; and
- They are all located outside a nationally designated landscape area with many situated in the less constrained PARR.

Particular policies applying to the rural settlements include Housing Policy HSG4, Economic Policy ECN3 and Policy COM4 which deals with community facilities.

DIAGRAM 1: The Broad Strategic Areas and the Settlement Hierarchy



Rural Settlements

7.21 The rural settlements within the District are identified at paragraph 3.29. Providing limited housing opportunities in these selected locations will help support local services that are vulnerable to closure and meet the needs of the local population ensuring these rural communities remain vibrant and healthy.

7.22 Policy HSG4 has been framed so that the dispersed settlement pattern of North Devon is not exacerbated, the landscape quality of the District is not compromised, and any conflicts with the principles of sustainability are minimised. New housing will be restricted to those sites that are well related to the main built up area of a settlement. Any development that damages the rural character of the surrounding countryside or the settlement and its setting will not be permitted in accordance with those policies contained in the Development Standards and Environment Chapters.

7.23 The primary purpose for allowing limited housing in small rural settlements is to sustain their vitality and to meet the needs of the local community. New dwellings coming forward on single plots will be subject to secure arrangements to ensure their occupancy is limited both initially and in the future to:-

1. Existing residents who have lived in the locality for a continuous period of at least five years and are in need of a separate home (defined as those setting up a new household as a result of co-habitation, marriage, divorce or separation, or those that have, or are about to leave, tied accommodation on retirement) or whose present accommodation is sub-standard or unsuitable to their present circumstances because of their age, an impairment, medical condition or to meet the needs of a growing family;
2. A person who has worked in the parish for a continuous period of at least five years; or
3. Someone currently employed within the parish in an agricultural related activity, as a professional health, care or social worker or as a primary teacher; or
4. People who have moved away but have strong established and continuous links with the parish by reason of birth or family and still have a parent or guardian living there.

Restricting the occupation of a new dwelling in this manner will help ensure there is a stock of homes to meet the housing needs of the local community. A cascade approach will be applied to any property not let or sold within a reasonable period in accordance with the guidance contained at paragraph 7.48.

Where a site is capable of accommodating more than one dwelling, consideration will be given to permitting an element of open market housing as a means of enabling the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of the local community. On such sites, at least 50% of new homes must be affordable and restricted to meeting the needs of the local community in accordance with HSG7 and the guidance set out in paragraphs 7.45 and 7.48. Affordable housing to meet the specific needs of lower income groups in the local community will also be permitted in the identified rural settlements through the 'exceptions' approach providing any scheme meets the requirements of Policy HSG8.

NORTH DEVON LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

POLICY HSG4 (RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN IDENTIFIED RURAL SETTLEMENTS)

Residential development in an identified rural settlement will be permitted where:-

- A) it is well related to the main built up area of the settlement;
- B) it does not harm the rural character and setting of the settlement and the surrounding countryside;
- C) in the case of a single dwelling, secure arrangements are made to ensure the dwelling remains available to meet the needs of the local community both initially and in the long term provided the need exists; and
- D) in the case of a scheme involving more than one dwelling, at least 50% of the total number of dwellings provided are affordable to meet the housing needs of the local community.

POLICY ECN4 (EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO AGRICULTURE)

A proposal for employment development related to agriculture will only be permitted in the countryside where:-

- A) it cannot be satisfactorily accommodated on existing, committed or proposed employment land or within or on the edge of a town or village;
- and
- B) it does not harm the character of the countryside.

POLICY COM4 (COMMUNITY FACILITIES)

1. A development proposal for a community facility will be permitted within or immediately abutting the main built up area of a town, identified village or identified rural settlement providing:-

- A) the scale of the facility is related to the needs of the local community;
- B) it does not harm the character of the settlement or the surrounding countryside; and
- C) it is accessible to a range of transport modes.

2. A development proposal involving the loss of a community facility will only be permitted where:-

- A) there is no demand for the facility from the local community or the facility is unviable; or
- B) there is a replacement or alternative facility available of at least equivalent standard and accessibility to the community served by the original facility; or
- C) any replacement facility or rationalisation of an existing facility provides benefits to the local community which outweigh any harm from loss of the original facility.



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Address: Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9HL.
 Project Contact: Colin Savage Telephone: 01398 322249. Fax: 01398 323150.
 E-mail: cbsavage@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

East and West Worlington Parish Plan

Part 3 - Housing Needs Survey

Please complete this form if you consider that you are in need of local affordable housing in East Worlington parish and may need to move to another home in the parish or an adjoining one over the next five years. Please return it to the Rural Housing Project in the envelope provided.

Complete a separate form for each household in need of housing.

If you require extra forms or have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

A. Local Connection.

1) It is intended that any affordable homes delivered in East Worlington will be for people living or working in East Worlington Parish, or an adjoining one, or for those who can show that they have a long-term connection with the area - for example, people who have moved away but would like/need to return.

Please tick any that apply to you

Have you lived in the East Worlington Parish or an adjoining* parish (please state) continuously for the last 5 years ?	
Have you worked in East Worlington Parish or an adjoining* parish (please state) continuously for the last 5 years, or do you provide services of importance to the local community and live closer to your work? (agriculture, emergency services, health care, social work, teacher).	
Have you moved away but have strong established and continuous links with the locality by reason of birth or family and still have a parent or guardian living there?	
Do you know someone who has a strong link with East Worlington parish who would like to move back? If so, please put them in touch with the Rural Housing Project	

* (Adjoining parishes – Chulmleigh, Meshaw, Witheridge, and parishes in the adjoining Mid-Devon District Council area).

B. Identifying Housing Need

2) Why do you need to move? Please tick any that apply to you

a) First independent home		j) Currently homeless	
b) Couple setting up home together		k) Cannot manage stairs	
c) Present home too small		l) Present home in poor condition	
d) Present home too large		m) Renting but would like to buy	
e) Present home too expensive		n) Moved away and wish to return	
f) Private tenancy ending shortly		o) Need specially adapted home	
g) Private tenancy, need more security		p) For family support	
h) In tied housing, need more security		q) To be near work	
i) Family break up		r) Other please explain	

a) Which of the above is your main reason? Please state one only

3) When will you need to move? Tick one only

Within 12 months		3 – 5 years	
1 – 3 years		5 + years	

4) Could you remain in your present home if alterations, adaptations or support were provided?

Yes	
No	

a) If Yes, please specify what would be needed:.....

C. Affordability

5) Employment

Please indicate the nature of you and/or your partner's employment and whether it is full time, part time, casual or seasonal.

Your employment;

Your partner's employment;

6) Income

It will help us to assess the type of affordable housing you can afford if you can indicate your level of income. This would be combined income for couples/households.

Which of the following ranges of **annual income** does your household have? (Gross income, before deductions). Please tick the appropriate box.

a. Less than £15,000 pa.		If you prefer to state your weekly or monthly income please do so below; Weekly = Monthly =
b. £15,000- £18,000 pa.		
c. £18,000- £25,000 pa.		
d. £25,000- £35,000 pa.		
e. £35,000 - £45,000 pa.		
f. Over £45,000 pa.		

7) Savings

Do you have savings or equity you could use as a deposit for an affordable home or provide you with additional income?

Yes		Please state amount (to nearest £500)	
No			

8) Depending on affordability, would you be interested in; Tick all that apply

a. Renting a home? (Most likely through a Housing Association)	
b. Low cost home ownership?	
c. Shared ownership? (part buy/part rent – through a Housing Association)	
d. Self build?	

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