

# DEVON RURAL HOUSING ENABLER BULLETIN no.3 September 2006

Welcome to the third edition of the Devon Rural Housing Enabler.

The aim of this Bulletin is to keep our stakeholders up to date with what's happened since the second edition of our Bulletin and what is up and coming!

## *Thanks to Stuart*

The DRHP steering group gave thanks to Stuart May for his term of being chair at the last meeting in August, and wished him well for his future.

## *DRHP New Chair*

Our meeting in August welcomed acceptance of the Chair from Anne Harries of Hastoe Housing Association, she accepted this position initially for six months, and is looking forward to taking the partnership forward at this time of change in rural housing.

## *Conference 7<sup>th</sup> November in Exminster*

### *Developing and Living in a Sustainable Village*

This conference aims to discuss and agree a common definition of what constitutes a "sustainable community" for planners and inhabitants of rural villages. If you would like to book your place further information is available on the CCD website at

[www.devonrcc.org.uk](http://www.devonrcc.org.uk)

## *Rural Affordable Housing Competition*

DRHP and DSHG launched a design competition in July. Its aim to demonstrate achievements, share good practice and ideas, and achieve improvements in the internal and external design of affordable housing and to assist in improving the understanding of customer satisfaction.

## *New Initiatives*

## Government provides web support to providers of affordable homes in rural communities

A new Government website [www.defra.gov.uk/rural/arh/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/arh/index.htm) providing information, useful contacts and links to best practice for those directly engaged, or interested, in the provision of affordable homes in rural areas has been launched today.

Sponsored jointly by DCLG and Defra, the website follows the report of the Affordable Rural Housing Commission (ARHC), which looked at the need for more affordable housing in rural areas. The site sets out current and proposed Government housing and planning policies, impacting on the rural sector. Housing Minister Yvette Cooper, said there was a need to see more affordable housing in rural areas.

"The website will be an important resource for those working on housing in the rural areas - including local authorities, housing associations, landowners and country groups – both on policy developments and on best practice to deliver more decent affordable houses in rural communities.

Rural Affairs Minister Barry Gardiner said:

"The website demonstrates the government is considering how it can improve the supply of affordable housing in rural areas as an integral part of its work.

"This is a vital part of our contribution to creating sustainable rural communities and rising to the challenge of how we can meet social, economic and environmental needs in the countryside."

### *Up and Coming Meeting Arrangements:*

## **STEERING GROUP MEETING: 19<sup>th</sup> October**

**Signpost Housing Offices Exeter 10 -1pm**

In preparation for the joint meeting in November it would be helpful if as many members of DRHP as possible could attend a short meeting to consider the future direction of the partnership. The steering group would be grateful for as much input as possible from the wider membership in order to stimulate debate. This part of the meeting is scheduled for 10 – 11am; this meeting will precede a steering group meeting to which all partners are invited if they wish to stay on.

If you are unable to attend please send your comments on this issue before the 18<sup>th</sup> October, so that the meeting can take account of your views.

## **17<sup>th</sup> November Partnership Day**

Many of you will be aware that a joint meeting for the members of the Devon Rural Housing Partnership and the Devon Strategic Housing Group has been arranged for this day. This meeting is to discuss the future of both partnerships and to see if improvements can be made to prevent duplication of work, reduce the number of meetings and prevent confusion over roles. Please note this day in your diary, more information to follow.

### *What's been happening since Bulletin 2?*

#### **AIM 1: Raise awareness of the need for affordable housing**

- Completed Housing Needs Survey for Dunkeswell (East Devon) is posted on the rural housing page of the CCD website, and a refresher survey for Uplyme (East Devon)
- The following surveys are all going ahead or in report stage: Ashwater, Pyworthy, Pancrasweek, Dolton, Holsworthy Hamlets (all in Torridge), Moretonhampstead, and Ipplepen (Teignbridge)
- Uptontery (East Devon) Housing Needs Surveys is due to start shortly. There are discussions around a refresher survey in Holne (South Hams) and Drewsteignton (West Devon).

#### **AIM 2: To enable the provision of affordable housing in the geographical area stated**

- Negotiations with developers and landowners in Uplyme (East Devon) and Thorverton (Mid Devon) continue.
- Working with Clinton Devon Estates in East Devon
- Working on ways in which Devon Land Bank Trust can be used to support Community Land Trusts.
- Met with Planners from Dartmoor National Park to discuss a village trust proposal

**AIM 3: To influence regional and local strategies that impact on affordable housing**

- Continued to support the High Bickington CPT , and Holsworthy CPT (Torrige).
- Work continues to build and develop partnerships between the RHEs and DRHP partners.
- Responded to the Regional Spatial Strategy through the DRHP
- Both RHEs are members of the Local Area Agreement task group looking at how affordable housing fits into the agreement, and how to increase freedoms and flexibilities around planning systems to increase delivery.

**AIM 4: Work with local authorities to contribute to their statutory duty to provide housing advice, information and awareness raising to rural residents**

- Training organised with South Hams to deliver a CLT session for Parish Councils on 1<sup>st</sup> November at Ivybridge Town Hall.

**AIM 5: To provide information to help national issues relating to affordable housing in rural areas.**

- Continue to work closely with the other RHEs in the South West region and GoSW.

*Contact details:*

**Sue Southwell**

[sue@devonrcc.org.uk](mailto:sue@devonrcc.org.uk)

**Sue Hitchcock**

[susan@devonrcc.org.uk](mailto:susan@devonrcc.org.uk)

**Tel: 01392 383419**

**Web site: [www.devonrcc.org.uk](http://www.devonrcc.org.uk)**