

## Report on Housing Needs Assessments – WPNP

The toolkit states that not every neighbourhood plan needs a housing needs assessment and it is not a compulsory requirement. Although we are not putting forward area of land to be built on (Purbeck Plan already has designated areas) we have identified housing as an important issue for our NP to address.

One important issue is that biggest majority of those that replied to our questionnaire stated they did not want the village to grow excessively therefore part of our policy should state that the numbers already allocated to Wool Parish must not increase!

**There is much more to add to produce a 'Policy' this is purely a starting point.**

### **Still need to establish**

- > housing need figures**
- > number of houses 1, 2 bed and if available number of residents in properties**
- > % of residents asking for each aspect listed below**
- > I am sure there is more?**

Housing for older people: (the age classed as 'older' now seems to be 55 or older) Currently there are too few smaller dwellings to enable people to downside/retire to and therefore residents are either remaining in houses, which are too big for their needs, or having to move from their village.

The area already has some sheltered housing and small cottages with two, or less, bedrooms. As many of us are living longer the proportion of older residents is set to grow.

Preferred options were for single storey properties to be included in any housing development for older residents, perhaps with necessary facilities ie scooter store and able to be adapted if need be for residents to remain in their homes for as long as possible. Another possibility might be a 'granny annexe' addition to an existing family house, which could also be used for independent low-income young adults still living at home.

Access to village services become more important as people age and mobility reduces, local shops, buses & open spaces. Therefore properties for active adults should be sited closest to existing village facilities and link directly onto foot, cycle paths and mobility scooter routes.

### Housing for families:

There should be opportunity for families to remain in, return to or move into the parish by the provision of some larger but not luxury housing.

There are some larger houses in the area many are older properties and do not come on the market very often. Extensions to existing properties, where there is space and need planning permission, may be supported by the Parish Council.

#### Affordable housing:

We seek to achieve the right housing mix to ensure cohesive and diverse communities in the parish. We require that all housing schemes have ?% of affordable housing.

Design, quality and sustainability standards including a requirement that affordable housing should not be visually distinguishable from the market housing on the site in terms of build quality, materials, architectural details, levels of amenity space, parking provision and privacy. Affordable housing should meet the latest Homes and Communities Agency Design and Quality Standards.

Affordable housing should be provided to meet local housing needs.

#### Housing setting and open space:

The challenge new housing faces when located at one end of parish settlement, is not to feel isolated. It is therefore important to establish easy links into the heart of the village and make any new development feel part of it.

These links should include views and vistas with green spaces between areas. Existing mature trees or old hedges should be conserved and incorporated into the development. Additional tree planting could include edible species such as fruit trees including hazel and walnut. Bio-diversity should also be encouraged, by developing wildlife areas next to existing wildlife habitats.

Links to amenities, through foot and cycle paths linked to existing paths. Residents should be able to walk, cycle and use mobility scooters in safety.

Development should include adequate off-street car parking to minimize on street parking on exiting routes. Provide minimal levels of street and path lighting. Maintain views. Conserve mature trees and old hedgerows. Retain areas liable to flooding as green open space. Provide adequate green open spaces, including informal open space areas for dog walkers with dog bin provision. Consideration given to facilities for all age groups but particularly the young people. Self-build plots?

Nearly all of those who responded to the questionnaire felt that:

1. It was important to keep as many of the fields surrounding the parish as possible and did not want to see large developments built on these.
2. Open green space in the village was important and reflected the rural feel of the area as a valued aspect of living there.
3. Parking was a problem throughout the village.

Some areas of the parish have been established as not suitable for housing therefore it is important these open green spaces are preserved.

### Housing design and density:

Residents preferred new housing to be of a more traditional design in keeping with the older centre of village.

New housing should be designed well and built to last from quality materials. The materials used should be predominantly red brick, all to reflect a traditional style and blend with the nearby housing.

New houses built to a traditional design can still be innovative and with increased energy costs and detrimental effect on the environment, more energy efficient building should be encouraged resulting in lower fuel bills. Sustainable construction and high-energy standards will be expected to meet or better the following, as they will apply at the time of construction.

\*Green Construction is about building a structure that is beneficial or non-harmful to the environment and resource efficient, otherwise known as green building. This type of construction in its use of local and renewable materials, and in the energy required to build it, as well as the energy generated whilst being used.

\*Natural Building is a similar concept, which is usually on a smaller scale and tends to focus on the use of natural materials that are available locally. Construction uses locally sourced materials as far as possible; water conservation which may include biological waste water treatment and re-use (a reed bed for example), the simple collection and recycling of rainwater for garden use; Low energy light bulbs; natural insulation materials; non-toxic paints and wood preservatives; and locally-grown timber from sustainably managed forests.

On street parking is perceived as a problem throughout the parish with many older houses with no off-street parking. With many comments put forward by respondents to the questionnaire, adequate parking to avoid further problems with street parking was highlighted as an important consideration in any new housing development. Street parking does slow down through traffic though and can serve as inadvertent but effective traffic calming.

Whilst a certain level of street lighting will be necessary, most residents felt this should be kept to an absolute minimum and capped to focus light on the ground where it is needed and so avoid unnecessary light pollution of the night sky. Infrequent low level lighting can be used for foot paths.

The parish supports a range of commercial premises and community facilities and this variety of services was stated as one of the reasons that the area is such a popular place to live and work. There is a range of shops including small supermarkets, post office, butchers, bakers, hairdressers, hardware store, delicatessen, take-away, garage & petrol stations, public houses, dentist, doctors surgery and pharmacy along with successful village halls which support a wide range of clubs and societies, churches & primary schools.