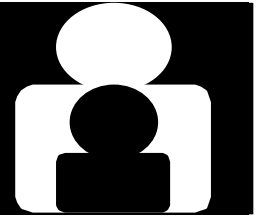


Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum



RAISING AWARENESS ● SEEKING SOLUTIONS
Affordable Housing Working Group

The Peak District Affordable Housing Plan for Action

*“For anyone interested in finding
workable solutions to affordable
rural housing needs”*

Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum

The Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum was founded in 1992 to campaign on and raise awareness of rural poverty and deprivation, the often hidden side of the Peak District. Within our work we have co-ordinated a series of working groups which address particular issues within rural deprivation. The Affordable Housing Working Group, which organised the conference, is one such group.

Affordable Housing Working Group

The Affordable Housing Working Group is made up of local residents, housing professionals and other interested bodies, including the Peak District National Park Authority. The aim of the group is to work together to explore practical solutions to affordable housing and to influence policy. We decided that a conference was timely as affordable housing is a hot issue with strategies being developed at national and local levels, and with various schemes being developed by housing associations and private developers across the Peak District. The Group is open to new members and will continue to campaign on this vital issue.

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Introduction

Affordable housing is a subject that has been in people's hearts for years and more recently on the lips of politicians in Westminster. It is a subject that everyone has an opinion about. Many of these opinions and the practical solutions were discussed at a conference on affordable housing held in Buxton, Derbyshire on 19 November 2005. This plan of action has arisen out of that conference and the work of many residents, professionals and agencies to develop affordable housing in the Peak District.

Starting with what is important

We started the conference by listening to local people who shared their experience of being in housing need. Their stories are:

1. Virginia Heywood, from Bradwell spoke about losing their tied accommodation when her husband lost his job. Their search for affordable accommodation was difficult, stressful and only ultimately resolved two weeks before there would have been made homeless.
2. Melanie Hodgkinson from Butterton spoke about the difficulties of being a single mother with two children, how rented accommodation is expensive and how residency requirements often leave women who have to move home not eligible to be re-housed.
3. Lisa Blackburn from Hartington is a young police officer who returned to the Peak District where she was born. She and her partner have been unable to find affordable housing to rent or buy. They had access to land upon which to build a house but planning regulations restricted building in their village.

Each of the local residents spoke about what is at the heart of the debate about affordable housing, the right to be housed in safe and secure homes. Before the bricks and mortar, what we must always focus on is the people that need to live in the houses – new, empty, old, second homes, rented or bought – affordable housing is about people.

Points for action

The following action points were prioritised at the conference:

1. Improving the planning process to ensure it encompasses the full range of issues that create sustainable communities
2. Make planning more supportive by:
 - Providing more guidance so that local people know who to speak to, when and what about.
 - Speeding up the process, not pushing things to appeal
 - Ensuring consistency of decision making
 - Allowing permission for homes not holiday homes
 - Being flexible about definition of a settlement
3. Develop closer working relationships with local communities to raise awareness of the process of providing affordable housing
4. Ensure that affordable housing is integral to community plans, including parish plans
5. Make use of existing sites such as empty or under-used buildings to develop affordable housing. Bring more empty properties back into use
6. Lobby against the proposed self-investment pension scheme (SIPS) **Key success – the proposed SIPS have been dismissed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his statement on 5th December 2005**
7. Identify alternative funding partners other than government, for example local trusts, private trusts, charities and large employers.

Where now?

Three weeks after the conference, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown announced that plans for second homes to be included in the Self Investment Pension Scheme were being examined and that the tax incentive would no longer apply. One of our demands was met! Now to the other action points....

Next steps

The Affordable Housing Working Group is keen to continue to campaign on the issue. It will be taking forward the action points from the conference and initially it will:

1. Work with the Rural Housing Enabler to be appointed in Derbyshire and continue to lobby for an enabler in Staffordshire
2. Make a formal link to the Joint Housing Strategic Service Affordable Housing Working Group (constituting High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council)
3. Move towards independence for the group to enable it to raise funds to continue its work
4. Circulate the plan for action to key players at local, regional and national level
5. Continue to provide information to members of the group to ensure effective campaigning, for example inviting the empty properties officer to a meeting
6. Send action points from conference to Commission for Rural Communities, Defra Commission of Affordable Rural Housing and the Local Strategic partnerships in the Peak District, and other relevant commissions or partnerships
7. To continue to work in partnership with the Peak District National Park Authority, and in particular to lobby on changes to planning regulations and their implementation.

Sustainability

The issue of affordable housing is complex; it is not just about building houses to buy or rent but about the development and support of sustainable communities in our rural areas. The workshops looked at sustainability from a number of angles including:

- Appropriate building material
- Use of empty properties
- Challenging the increasing number of second homes and their impact on local communities
- Partnership working to ensure that local people are involved and informed about developments that directly impact on them and their families
- Housing young people
- Looking at the definition of a settlement
- Improving the planning process to ensure it encompasses the full range of issues that create sustainable communities
- The balance between environmental protection and developing communities.

Action points

The specific action points raised by conference delegates on this issue are:

1. Identify reasons for empty properties (What? Why? Where?) and create a register
2. Make use of existing sites such as empty or under used buildings to develop affordable housing
3. Make planning more supportive by
 - Speed, not pushing things to appeal
 - Consistency of decision making
 - Permission for homes not holiday homes
 - Flexibility about definition of a settlement
4. Affordable housing must be part of a community plan (an essential part) and integrated into the villages' aspirations
5. Reduce building costs, increase energy efficiency, planners should be more willing to accept lower cost buildings
6. Provide education on planning for young people
7. Campaign to influence planners to take more account of the effect of their decisions on local residents
8. Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum to look into how a community land trust could work and to act as a community land trust champion
9. Lobby against the proposed self-investment pension plans.

Local context

Alison Clamp, from Midlands Rural Housing and Peak District Rural Housing Association, spoke eloquently about the local housing context, what has happened and what the current plans are for affordable housing in the area.

Numbers

1. The number of houses being built by Housing Associations is:
 - 58 starts in 2004/5 in Derbyshire Dales
 - 200 given permission by Peak Park since 1991
2. Housing is being built by local people:
 - 150 given permission by Peak Park since 1991.

Money

The current planned Government spend on affordable housing is £3.9 billion which is more funding for housing than ever before:

- 4.6% of that comes to the East Midlands
- That is £165m for new affordable housing for 2006/8
- Of this, £10.5m is for Peak Sub Region (High Peak and Derbyshire Dales)

However, this is equivalent to 180 homes over two years and the waiting list alone for Derbyshire Dales District Council is over 2400. A recent housing need survey has shown that 442 homes are needed each year in the Peak Sub Region alone.

Testing the ideas

Alison suggested four tests for housing: Affordable; For local people; In perpetuity; and Desirable. Looking at:

Rented housing

- *Affordable* – target rents/Housing Benefit
- *Local people* – HA can control letting
- *Perpetuity* – ensured by tenancy
- *Desirability* – for some but not for aspiring.

Shared ownership housing

- *Affordable* – only for those with steady income/ capital
- *Local people* – HA can restrict share and therefore restrict ownership
- *Perpetuity* – At a price to owners.
- *Desirability* – more than rent but a new complicated idea

Local people can build for themselves in the Peak Park

- *Affordable* – land? and build cost?
- *Local people* – Yes
- *Perpetuity* – Yes but at a price
- *Desirability* – for those who can and want to stay.

Barriers and tensions

There are a number of barriers and tensions, including:

1. Cost of developing versus affordability
2. Shortage of sites as there are issues of landscape versus development and of landowners' expectations

3. Shortage of funding
4. NIMBYs.

However, the Government is listening so the time is right.

National context

Jo Lavis is head of the affordable housing team in the Rural Communities Division of the Department for the Environment, Fishing and Rural Affairs (Defra). She spoke to the conference about what is happening nationally and, in particular, the work of Defra's Rural Affordable Housing Commission.

Defra is interested in affordable housing because sustainable development = sustainable communities and affordable housing is a priority in the department's Five-Year strategy. It is also the Minister for Rural Affairs' number one rural priority. Defra is an influencer and not a provider. It influences other government departments by advocating the rural perspective.

Affordable Rural Housing Commission

Defra has established the Commission: *'To improve access to affordable housing for those who live and work in rural areas'*. The Commission's membership includes a number of people from social, economic and environmental backgrounds. It is taking evidence from around the country with dedicated National Parks visits. It will be reporting in Spring 2006.

Digesting the evidence

So far some of the issues raised are:

- To allocate land or not to allocate? – *getting the land at the right price? Other models for owning/providing land?*
- Finance – *delivery through private funding?*
- Policy integration – *better rural proofing*
- Leadership – *stronger community engagement?*

Jo concluded by suggesting some food for thought:

- Is 'more affordable' enough?
- How do we get good design at a cost that makes it possible to build?
- Could a Community Land Trust help?
- What could be the added benefits of the Rural Pathfinder and Local Area Agreements?
- How better could parish plans feed into district and National Park strategies?
- How can the Peak 'rural voice' be strengthened at a regional level?

Answering our questions

The conference concluded with a panel consisting of Tony Hams, Peak District National Park Authority; Gerald Taylor, Dales Housing; and Jo Lavis, Defra. The afternoon workshops had drawn up a number of questions to put to the panel. The following are a sample of their responses.

1. What is Affordable?

Two responses:

- Less than market value
- 3.5% above lower quartile of income is considered unaffordable.

2. Should we introduce an incremental empty properties tax?

Though the panel agreed in the importance of bringing empty properties in to use, there was concern about the feasibility of an empty properties tax and in the definition of what is an empty property, for example an elderly of definition e.g. person in care home might wish to return to their home or a house may be in probate. A couple of ideas were suggested:

- Ring fence council tax from empty properties into housing regeneration
- Bring property back into use through compulsory purchase order and then make available as affordable housing.

3. Are Community Land Trusts a way forward for affordable housing?

Whilst it was recognised that the land trusts are not new, they could be the one big idea to take forward. They are being explored by Defra, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office. A wider pilot is needed to look at tax incentives for landowners. Ideas suggested include:

- Separate cost of land from cost of building as this would have impact on cost of affordable housing
- If need is proven and land identified then don't wait.

4. Panellist were asked to name a single block and a way to unblock it

Block: Separating cost of land from cost of building on land

Unblock: The Peak District National Park Authority needs to take steps in identifying land by working with parish councils

Block: Finding appropriate sites for affordable housing where need has been identified

Unblock: through planning regime or incentives to land owners e.g. tax grant

Block: Lack of mechanism where people interested come together e.g. planning, housing, communities

Unblock: through partnership working and such events as this conference.

5. Why do planning authorities not engage with landowners in a trade off?

There is already provision in planning guidance for this engagement. There is an issue about the rising cost of land which can undermine plans for affordable housing i.e. planning permission given for open market, next

landowner might wait till land price rises and then sell on open market.

Ideas/action suggested:

- This will be looked at in local development framework for the national park
- Compromise – tell landowner that can build for local need/family and other plots for affordable housing (incentive as family can shortcut waiting list). Jo Lavis was interested in the idea and will take it to the Defra Affordable Rural Housing Commission

6. Could PDNPA be quicker and more transparent in its planning process? The Peak Park's new Local Development Plan is being developed to replace the structure plan agreed 15 years ago when affordable housing was not such a big issue. The Park's policy officers are preparing suggestions on more radical options for affordable housing which they hope will be accepted. It was agreed that

- There needs to be a quicker decision making process, at present 60% of planning applications are processed in eight weeks.
- There is a need for consistency is recognised within constraints of policy.

Sharing information

A number of ideas and information were shared during the morning workshops. The workshops were also used to draw up a number of action points which were then prioritised and discussed in the afternoon session.

Filling empty houses

Led by Chris Curtis, Strategic Housing Officer, High Peak and Derbyshire Dales Joint Strategic Housing Service, it looked at the thorny issue of empty houses – what are the rules and what can we do about it.

What is an empty property?

Basically, any property empty for more than six months that is

- NOT owned by a social housing organisation
- NOT a holiday or second home
- NOT a 'transactional vacancy' awaiting sale or letting.

What are the benefits of using empty properties?

- *Owners* benefit from rental income; increased capital value; help with suitable tenants; security against vandalism and squatting.
- *Communities* benefit from better visual appeal of neighbourhoods; less anti-social behaviour; regeneration.
- *Strategic benefits* include meeting housing targets; encouraging brown field site use; reducing urban sprawl/demand for additional resources; regeneration of existing communities.

Actions and measures to be taken: direct actions can be in the form of Compulsory Purchase Orders, Enforced Sales Procedures; Closing Orders and Empty Homes Management Order.

Measures to encourage empty properties onto market are: second homes council tax to fund affordable housing; reduction of council tax discount on empty properties; grant aid to landlords to make properties decent and affordable; empty properties grant; social housing grants, disabled, energy efficiency and listed building grants.

Future strategies include helping owners of empty properties to bring properties back into use; advice on Housing Associations; repairs and letting schemes; creating a database of all empty properties across the region; extending the Derbyshire Dales Empty Homes Strategy into High Peak; target of 42 properties per year brought back into use between 2005-2009. Finally employ a full-time Empty Property Officer.

Action points

1. Incremental empty property tax
2. Identify reasons for empty properties (what? Why? Where?) and create a register
3. Increase public debate on the issue
4. Re visit local plans including the idea of asset transfers.

Building affordable housing

Led by Matthew Dick, Director of Operations and Gerald Taylor, Chief Executive, Dales Housing, it highlighted a number of issues both for action and for changes in legislation. They suggested a number of interesting issues and solutions:

Housing needs surveys

There is a vital need for more frequent Housing Needs Surveys to identify local need for affordable housing. There was uncertainty about the frequency of surveys, who funded them and whether or not local councils could fund their own. It was felt that this was a priority so that if a piece of land is identified the local needs are always to hand and are up to date.

Incentives to sell suitable land

On the identification of suitable sites there was much discussion on smaller landowners (farmers, etc.) who may have a site but be reticent to let it go for affordable housing at less than market value. In order to encourage the release of such land it was felt that legislation could be amended to allow for a 'trade off'. For example, if a farmer had a plot of land but was unwilling to release as he may lose out financially, offer an incentive by allowing him to build or have a plot on his land for a member of his family.

An alternative suggestion was that government/planners be able to offer some kind of sweetener (incentive) for the release of suitable land as why should a land owner subsidise affordable housing by releasing land cheaply?

Buy to demolish?

Buy to demolish and rebuild affordable housing. Alternatively housing associations could build smaller properties and agree to let those living in larger properties, which are no longer suitable, to move into these and thus release larger properties for families (this assumes a housing association would buy a larger property)

Compulsory purchase of empty houses

Empty properties should be possessed for use as affordable housing, providing that great sensitivity is used in determining why they are empty and the status of the owners. The use of compulsory purchase orders should be encouraged

Legislative control on utilities providers

There should be some legislative control over the utilities providers. Their costs are so often extortionate so that the funding from the Housing Corporation, etc., does not cover the full cost of the build.

Change the local occupancy clause

There was a great deal of concern about the local occupancy clause. They felt that the clause had in some way outlived its usefulness in its present form. Whilst it was recognised that the clause was introduced to ensure affordable housing was protected, it was felt that the local occupancy areas are far too

small. It was suggested that the area should be widened, for example to the national park boundaries or to the local council boundaries.

Action points

1. Needs to be closer working of grass roots level with local community to raise awareness of the process of providing affordable housing
2. Change in planning policy to allow a local land owner to provide plots for affordable homes in exchange for a guaranteed nomination to house a family member
3. Review the local occupancy conditions to make it wider, for example to the national park boundaries
4. Review what is counted as public subsidy, for example allow more flexibility in use of S106 monies as government 'sweetener' to persuade land owners to release sites
5. Issuing of government guidance to utilities (water, highways, gas, transport etc) to relax current regulations for affordable homes/sites.

Working in partnership

Led by Janice Wigley from Parwich Village Action Group, it looked at the importance of community involvement through a successful local scheme to build affordable housing. Janice spoke about the School House development and the role of the village action group. The group has built 3 three-bedroom houses for local people. The group won the UK Housing Award 2004 for the best community led initiative and have been nominated for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Sustainable Community Award. The rent per house is £72 per week and the properties play a significant role in making and keeping Parwich a living working village.

Five years ago the Peak Park and the Parish Council held an open meeting in the village, and from this an Action Group was set up. Residents were surveyed, and five key issues were identified, including play equipment and the environment and village maintenance. The top priority, screaming out for attention was affordable housing.

Since then the housing sub group, which was made up initially of three people who were really keen to work on the issue, has done very well. The village had a potential asset in the form of the old school house, which had formerly been occupied by the head teacher of the village school. It had subsequently been rented out and later still became vacant and was in a state of disrepair. The site had been given to the school and a house built on it in the 1950s by the Parwich Oddfellows, and was owned by the Derbyshire Dales, with the school acting as landlord. The group wanted to buy the land and house, and by luck a new village resident with planning experience and skills joined them. The group approached several housing associations and chose to work with Nottingham Community Housing Association, as they were enthusiastic about the project and helpful to the group. The Association negotiated with the local authority over the land purchase.

The main 'blips' were with the building. The group was offered a free gift of random stone by a local quarry, but due to restraints imposed by the Peak Park, which insisted on only builders from the approved list undertaking this type of work, they had to turn down the offer. The group had been disappointed that, in their view, the Peak Park had 'no room for compromise'. The result is buildings which have a less satisfactory finish and are less typical of the village.

The housing was allocated to families and couples who have lived in the village or had major associations [such as parents] with it in the last ten years. There were already ten one bedroom flats in the village, suitable for single people or couples without children. The group hopes to build more affordable housing in the future, and make it possible for a range of housing needs to be met in the village.

Janice stressed the importance of the local action group in the face of critical local opinion or negativity towards the plans. The group members took on a mediation role, and worked towards compromise. The attitude and role of the parish council can also be crucial. Determination in the face of obstacles, and productive partnership were also important features of the development's success.

Action points

1. Make use of existing sites such as empty or under used buildings to develop affordable housing
2. Make planning more supportive by
 - Speed, not pushing things to appeal
 - Consistency of decision making
 - Permission for homes not holiday homes
 - Flexibility about definition of a settlement
3. Definition of affordable: approach from the point of view of tenant or purchaser, not developer, so that it is affordable for income of £6-12 per hour
4. Identify alternative funding partners other than government, for example local trusts, private trusts, charities and large employers.

Land use – multipurpose plans

Led by John Davies, Vice Chair of Eyam Community Sports Association, it looked at a community scheme for multi-purpose use of quarry land, including affordable housing and sports facilities.

Eyam is a moderate sized village much visited because of its history but it also has a range of other problems typical of most villages in the Peak District – affordable housing is in short supply and there is also a lack of appropriate good quality sports and social facilities. The village is currently preparing a community plan. The steering group for the plan includes representatives of a wide range of local interests including the Parish Council, the Sports

Association, the Village Society, the School and representatives of the youth of the village.

An opportunity has arisen to develop a former industrial site in the centre of the village. The developer wanted to reclaim the derelict land by removing an area of waste minerals which still had a commercial value and by developing the site of the former processing plant for residential use. The developer sought community support for the project by offering the village a new football pitch and allowing an element of affordable housing within the residential development. The package of proposals was drawn up in close consultation with local interests particularly the Parish Council and the Sports Association. The local interests fought hard to ensure that the community benefits were maximised and guaranteed. The existence of the community benefits played a vital role in securing the acceptance of the Peak District National Park Authority who approved the proposals in March 2005.

Key elements

The key elements of the approved proposal are:

1. 27 dwellings, 10 of which are to be developed by a housing association to meet the local need for affordable housing
2. A new football pitch to an agreed specification to be gifted to the Sports Association
3. An agreed contribution to providing improved parking (jointly with the Parish Council), and site preparation for a new hard play area and a bowling green and design work on new changing rooms
4. Extensive landscaping of the whole area.

These proposals are to be incorporated into the proposals in the community plan to be published in 2006.

Key lessons

The key lessons to be learned from the experience of Eyam village are:

1. Take advantage of any opportunities which arise and press for community benefits to be included in any development proposals if practical. Press developers hard to ensure that their proposals reflect the needs of the community.
2. Always think about affordable housing in the context of other needs of the village. Developing a community plan is a useful way of doing this
3. Always try to encourage community support for a project from as wide a range of local people as possible.

Action points

1. Affordable housing must be part of a community plan (an essential part) and integrated into the villages' aspirations
2. How do you get groups involved and working together to change aspirations into reality?
3. Seize the opportunity if land becomes available
4. Openness of consultation process.

Not in my back yard

Led by Alison Clamp, Area Manager, Midlands Rural Housing, it looked the growing problem for those providing affordable housing in villages of the opposition from local people. Their opposition can be rooted in legitimate concerns but often it appears to be a reaction to lower priced properties being provided close to their own and fears about the type of people who will live in the houses. The workshop examined reasons for the 'Not in my back yard' attitude, tactics used by opponents to schemes and ways in which opposition can be countered.

Reasons

- Ignorance – about how housing is provided and who will be housed
- Fear – of change, disruption, new neighbours and possible effect on house prices
- Snobbishness – belief that those who need subsidised housing are lesser people
- Belief that housing will not be for genuine local people
- Assumptions are made about the 'type of people' who live in housing association properties can be compounded by media hype
- Landscape protection
- Traffic

Tactics used to oppose scheme

- Spread fear, Clever use of language, peer pressure on neighbours to join opposition – the sheep effect
- Clever use of Lawyers
- Village Green order tactic as used in Bakewell.

Counter Action

- Involvement of local community wherever possible in design and planning
- Good Communication / information
- Positive General publicity for affordable housing
- Use good design
- Get the 'shepherd' on your side to make sure the sheep effect works in providers favour.
- Infiltration of NIMBYs

Action points

1. Positive publicity for affordable housing to counter NIMBYs
2. Professionals to work at being open and approachable
3. Lobbying for affordable housing to influence national and local government legislation
4. Reduce building costs, increase energy efficiency, planners should be more willing to accept lower cost buildings.

Planning

This workshop was led by Lauren Dempsey, Community Planner, East Midlands Planning Aid Service and Malcolm Reid, Community Planner, West Midlands Planning Aid Service. It looked at understanding and getting

involved in the planning process. It suggested a number of ideas for understanding the process.

- E-mail newsletter
- Relationship to economics in the policies
- Ensuring planners are community orientated – work with the community
- Policy of mixed development
- Engage Parish Councils in needs surveys
- Advice on developers' consultations
- Statement of community involvement – knowing what to expect
- How pro-active Parish Council is letting community know about oops to get involved in planning consultations and applications
- Key workers – key ages – social mix
- Engaging with 6th forms.

Action points

1. Provide education on planning for young people (GCSE?)
2. Provide community engagement training for planners
3. Provide more guidance on who to speak to, when and about what
4. PDRDF to spread word and input into consultations such as the Regional Spatial Strategy (September 2006) and the PDNPA Core Strategy (March 2006).

Settlements

Led by Ian Fullilove from the Peak District National Park Authority, it looked at maintaining sustainable communities. It focussed on the importance of settlement patterns in determining where housing and housing investment should go. It outlined the fundamental reasons why settlements develop and the modern pressures for new development in town and countryside. It also outlined the special circumstances that apply in the Peak District owing to the status of large parts of the area as a National Park.

The workshop discussed the wider economic circumstances that exacerbate the problems of low supply of housing that is affordable to local people on low to moderate incomes. These include the:

- High demand for houses for second homes
- Inability of planning to prevent sale as a second home
- Loss of public housing through the right to buy route
- Comparatively low levels of build through private routes or registered social landlords
- Desirability of even small properties to people who can afford to pay high prices for the pleasure of living in the National Park whilst working in the surrounding urban area
- Higher costs of building in the National Park because of society's choice to conserve the character of the area
- High numbers of people on low to moderate incomes in the area who have a local connection but are unable to find property that is affordable leading to them having to move outside the area.

The policies of the National Park Authority are being reviewed, and this workshop shared many opinions on the merits of the current policies and the options for future policy. These ranged from a desire for a more liberal approach to proposals for development in the wider countryside outside settlements, to a more liberal approach to landowners and businesses (including farmers) desire to build houses to meet demand. The workshop threw up many positive ideas such as re-invigorating the idea of community land trusts to acquire land 'for sale' by public authorities and utilities companies at 'low rent'.

Participants clearly wanted the opportunity to feed into any review of land use policy that was founded on any grouping of settlements. This would include a chance to inform the identification of the criteria on which the review is undertaken.

Proposals

- Review National Park Authority housing policy more frequently than at present. The Authority now has the ability to review every three years.
- Review the settlements where development can take place and create opportunity for local input to any re-assessment and the determining of criteria for re-assessment
- Continue to seek improvements to housing needs surveys. The current surveys are not accurate as people have been forced to move away and do not fall into the categories of those surveyed
- Community Land Trusts should be re-invigorated as a means of communities acquiring land for low cost housing from local authorities and public companies seeking to dispose of assets at low cost. The Hayfield Development Trust has already investigated the potential of this route towards securing affordable housing for local people
- Housing for local people should take precedent over accommodation for tourists. There was a feeling that tourism takes priority over local need. It was accepted that tourism brings in money but irrespective of the market for holiday accommodation, local people are frustrated that planning permission for accommodation for local people outside of settlements is refused whilst the same development for tourism accommodation is permitted. Any tourism development should be proportionate to the size of the settlement.

Action points

1. Campaign to influence planners to take more account of the effect of their decisions on local residents
2. Add onto PDRDF's website a page devoted to housing that sets out a simple way of disseminating information about all forms of affordable housing
3. PDRDF to look into how a community land trust could work and to act as a community land trust champion
4. Lobby against the proposed self-investment pension plans.

Thanks

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