

Notes from the Housing Officer 2016

Housing Needs Assessment

The Parish of Church Lench

Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Monitoring 2011/12

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2011/12 (SHMA) indicates that there is an annual need for 167 new affordable homes within the district of Wychavon. Of these the property types most needed are smaller 1 and 2 bedroom homes for singles/couples and smaller families. The analysis in the report indicates that the need is split by tenure as 94% rent and 6% intermediate affordable housing. Intermediate affordable housing includes shared ownership and shared equity products but not affordable rented housing. Within Wychavon, research indicates that intermediate housing would be affordable to households with an annual income above £21,285 but less than £28,224. Above the £28,224 threshold, households are considered to be able to afford open market housing.

A new form of affordable housing model has been introduced as part of the Localism Act, known as 'Affordable Rent' housing and this model allows Registered Providers to charge a rent of up to 80 per cent of the local market rent. The SHMA indicates that in Wychavon, the cost difference between a 3 bedroom social rented house and an Affordable Rent house at 80% of open market rent is around £192 per month. The report goes on to say that a significant proportion of all households are unable to afford Affordable Rent housing, with 35% unable to afford a 1 bed apartment, 45% unable to afford a 2 bed apartment, 55% unable to afford a 3 bed house and 75% unable to afford a 4 bed house.

Parish Survey

The Previous Parish Survey was undertaken in 2005 and was considered too out of date to be useful, but subsequently superseded by the local HNS done in Jan 2017 for the South Lenches Parish Council NPlan.

Home Choice Plus Information

Home Choice Plus is a sub-regional choice based lettings scheme through which affordable housing is advertised including all new affordable housing developments. Access to Home Choice Plus is via a single register for housing. Applicants only have to register for housing once and are then able to bid for vacancies advertised.

The following figures are taken from Home Choice Plus on 2th July 2014. Of all those registered on Home Choice Plus, 1407 households have selected Church Lench as an area of preference and of these, 308 are in significant need based on government guidance.

However, because Church Lench is a rural parish, any new affordable housing development will be subject to local connection criteria.

Therefore there is just 1 household currently registered who has both a preference *and* a local connection (current address in parish) to Church Lench. Household type is:-

- 1 x Other

The neighbouring parishes of Harvington, Norton & Lenchwick, Fladbury, Hill & Moor, Bishampton, Abberton, Rous Lench and Abbots Morton have a total of 21 households who

have both a local connection (current address in parish) to their parish and have preference for Church Lench. Of these:-

- 7 x Single
- 3 x Couple
- 5 x Family
- 6 x Pensioner

It is now possible to identify the bedroom need from the Home Choice Plus system. The above households require the following:-

- 16 x 1 bed dwellings (incl. x 6 bungalows)
- 4 x 2 bed dwellings
- 2 x 3 bed dwellings

From the current available data it isn't possible to establish how many households have a local connection to any of the parishes through their employment or close family links.

Summary of Estimated Housing Needs

It is acknowledged that there is an annual need for 167 additional affordable homes within the district of Wychavon. This need has not been met in recent years and therefore there is an accruing deficit in the district.

The Home Choice Plus choice based lettings scheme can also be used as an indicator of housing need although it is recognised that many households with a need for re-housing do not necessarily register and therefore this is likely to be an under-estimate of the real local housing need.

As at 2nd July 2014, Home Choice Plus information indicates a total of 22 households who have a local connection to *either* the parish of Church Lench or an adjacent parish, who also have a preference for living there.

In consideration of the information set out above and in light of the fact that in rural areas there is a requirement for priority to be given to people with a local connection for any new affordable housing, it is considered that there is a low to medium need for additional affordable housing in the parish.

In terms of property type, the information available indicates that there is a predominant need for smaller 1 and 2 bedroom homes and a lesser need for 3 bedroom family homes. Property types needed include houses as well as flats and bungalows. In terms of tenure types, the main need is for rented accommodation with a small proportion willing to consider part ownership (subject to local affordability levels).

[Nb: SLNP Chairman's note: 25/09/17

I spoke to Housing Needs at Wychavon to find latest figures but they no longer split this way. They will send me some stats equivalent to this. Policy is to resist social housing in outlying remote locations unless local connection and pressing need - unlikely number eligible for CL has not changed from the singleton in 2014.

Rooftop Housing association should have info re number of social/affordable houses in the parish.]

