



Providing new affordable homes

The Council works with the **Devon Rural Housing Enablers** and **Housing Associations** to provide new affordable homes. The Devon Rural Housing Enablers can be contacted at Community Council for Devon on telephone **01392 383419**.

Affordable Homes in Your Community

A brief guide to affordable housing

What is Devon Home Choice?

Affordable rented housing in South Hams is allocated through Devon Home Choice. Applicants to the Council's housing register are banded according to their housing need. Vacant properties are advertised weekly and applicants can choose to apply for up to three properties that they are eligible for each week. www.devonhomechoice.com

How are affordable rented properties allocated?

Affordable rented properties are allocated in accordance with the Devon Home Choice scheme and Local Allocations policy. The applicant in the highest housing need for the longest period who meets all the qualifying criteria will be offered the property. Where there are strict local connection criteria determined through a legally-binding planning agreement the successful applicant must demonstrate that they can satisfy these to be considered for the property, regardless of housing need.

The Council passes the successful applicant's details to the relevant social landlord to verify the application to ensure they meet all the relevant criteria before a formal offer of accommodation can be made. Where there are more complex requirements, such as strict local connection criteria or a number of homes being delivered as part of a new development, it may take several weeks for the verification process to be completed and formal offers made.

If you would like to know more about providing affordable housing for your community please contact:

Affordable Housing Team
South Hams District Council,
Follaton House,
Plymouth Road, Totnes
Devon, TQ9 5NE.



Tel: 01803 861234

Email: affordable.housing@southhams.gov.uk



To get this information in another format or language, tel. 01803 861234

Helping to answer questions about affordable housing in your town or village



South Hams District Council

South Hams District Council's Affordable Housing team receive enquiries from individuals, town and Parish Councils asking questions about affordable housing in their town or village. This leaflet aims to answer some of these questions.

What is affordable housing?

Affordable housing is available to people who are earning local incomes, who are unable to afford to rent or buy a home on the open market.

The main types of affordable housing are;

- **Social Rented Housing**
This is rented housing which is owned and managed by Registered Providers (housing associations). Tenancies are secure and rents are regulated and kept affordable.
- **Affordable Rent Model**
This is a new national model and provides rented homes at up to 80% of market rents. Affordable Rent homes will be on flexible tenancies (minimum 2 years).
- **Shared Equity / Shared ownership**
These are home ownership models where a purchaser buys an initial share from a housing provider. A rent may be payable on the remaining share. The purchaser can buy additional shares ('staircasing') until they own the whole home, however this is restricted to 80% in rural areas.
- **Discounted Market Sale**
These are homes provided at a discount to the market value, typically a 20% -25% discount. The purchaser buys the whole home at a reduced rate and is obliged to pass on the discount to subsequent purchasers.

What is an Exception Site?

The 'Exception Sites Policy' allows small scale developments in rural communities to meet local housing needs within a particular Parish.

They are usually provided on sites that would not otherwise be allocated for housing.

An exception site may be granted planning permission if a scheme;

- Solely comprises affordable homes (no open market)
- Meets an identified need for affordable housing in the community
- Is in scale and keeping with the village
- Is well related to community services and facilities
- Is adjacent or adjoining the development boundary of the settlement

In all cases planning permission will be subject to a planning condition or obligation to ensure the affordable housing remains available and affordable in perpetuity to meet local housing needs.

What is a 'Section 106' site?

Most sites have a s.106 agreement but the term 's.106 site' is commonly used to describe sites which are 'developer led' and where the affordable housing is secured by way of a s.106 agreement.

What is the Village Housing Initiative?

The initiative allows small scale developments of affordable housing in rural communities on sites which might not otherwise be allocated for housing.

This Initiative is similar to the Exception Sites Policy but allows an element of market housing to incentivise landowners to bring land forward. In planning terms, it is outside of adopted policy and is therefore considered a 'departure'.

What is the Local Allocations Policy?

A new Local Allocations Policy has now been adopted which provides more opportunity to meet housing need in our rural parishes. The policy, which will sit alongside Devon Home Choice, will enable the Council to respond to the priorities of the local community alongside its statutory priorities to achieve more balanced and sustainable communities for the future by prioritising applicants to ensure that 50% of all new affordable rented homes to be set aside for applicants in housing need (bands A, B and C in the four market towns and bands A, B, C and D in the rural areas) who have a local connection to the Parish.

