

# **Chichester District Council LDF**

## **Tangmere Parish Plan**

### **Affordable Housing**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Tangmere Parish Council is producing a Parish Plan as part of the evidence to be submitted to CDC for its Local Development Framework. The results of a comprehensive community questionnaire are now available and this paper sets out the consequences for affordable housing in Tangmere. At the time of the 2001 Census there were 963 households in Tangmere of which 67% were owner occupied , 23% social rented property and 10% other. This compares to 71% owner occupied , 15% social rented properties and 14% other in Chichester.

#### **2.0 Background Documents**

Chichester District Council has provided several background documents that refer to affordable housing and the Parish Council is grateful for this information. In addition the Draft South East Plan is now available from SEERA with housing policies but no detailed housing allocation.

#### **2.1 Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Chichester District Council published a draft guide to Affordable Housing in September 2004 as part of the existing Local Plan process. Tangmere Parish Council replied to this consultation (letter dated 30 October 2004) and noted that the policies would be replaced by the Local Development Framework in 2007.

The draft guide stated that 2041 household in Chichester District were on the housing waiting list in May 2004 but this figure underestimates the total demand for affordable housing. There are a considerable number on 'concealed' households currently staying with family or friends. The current Local Plan policy (H8) states that the Council will seek to negotiate and 'appropriate' proportion of social housing on sites within the Settlement Policy Area (SPA).

The policy seeks a minimum of 30% affordable houses and assumes that, with public subsidy, developers will transfer land for the houses at 50% of the open market value. If there is no public subsidy the developer may be expected to provide a smaller number of houses or provide affordable housing off site in the

form of a commuted sum. It is not clear what public subsidies are now available and how the developer can fund the full cost of affordable housing.

Policy H4 requires a substantial proportion of a housing development to be smaller dwellings. The policy calls for a better mix of size and type of dwelling and this should be matched to the surrounding area. If developers are encouraged to fund the full cost of affordable housing there is a danger that this will be paid for by an equal number of large detached houses. This will not produce a better mix of properties. The Government may provide new forms of funding for affordable housing, as has been suggested in London, this could then be used to ensure that the mix is correct.

In Appendix 2 of the guide a snapshot of housing needs by parish is provided. It is interesting to note that 45% of the need is within Chichester City and only 1% in Tangmere. Equally importantly 53% of the need is for 1 bedroom with 36% needing 2 bedrooms and only 10% needing 3 or 4 bedrooms. In Tangmere the majority of need is for smaller properties and this is reflected in the Tangmere Parish Plan Questionnaire results.

## **2.2 Housing Needs Survey**

The Housing Needs Survey was based on a questionnaire sent to 13,550 households in the Chichester District in April 2004. There were 4,623 questionnaires returned which represents a response rate of 34% or 10% of the total number of households. The average price for all dwellings in the district during 2003/4 was £292,000 with detached houses £427,000, semi-detached houses £225,000, terraced houses £189,000 and flats £167,000.

59% of 'concealed' households would like to own their own home with only 22% preferring social rented housing. 51% expressed a need for a flat and 48% of new households say they only need one bedroom but would prefer two. The concealed demand for affordable housing is mainly in addition to the Waiting List.

The supporting documentation for the survey states that the most popular location for new households is Chichester City with Fishbourne and Midhurst also featuring as favourable locations. The survey found that people were choosing locations based on the quality of local services but also employment and proximity to family and place of birth.

Key workers include teachers, nurses and other public sector employees. Only a small number of key worker jobs are based in Tangmere and 10 houses have already be provided on the basis of shared equity. Key workers prefer owner occupancy (59%) but 74% of concealed key workers only need one bedroom.

The survey looks at the supply of different types of property and the preferences and needs expressed by new households. It is quiet clear that the existing stock (2001) of terraced houses (18%) meets demand but the stock of flats (14%) is far

lower than the preference (27%) of the need (51%). This results in an imbalance in the overall housing stock. The recommendation of the study is that

developments include a mix of types but these should be mainly small units to meet the needs of new households. The Consultations point out that each site needs to be assessed individually and that sustainability considerations will be important.

### **2.3 South East Plan**

The Draft South East Plan is now available on the Internet and several of the key policies refer to affordable housing. Policy H3 encourages housing on brownfield sites but says there should be due regard to 'local circumstances' and 'sustainability' issues. Sustainability points to locations with existing infrastructure and a choice of transport modes.

The South East Plan acknowledges that there is a backlog of unmet housing demand but states that this should be met where it arises. There could be a shift in land use to provide housing but the District Council must assess the need. The 'needs' of the local community should be assessed through the use of public consultation such as Parish Plans.

The Plan is likely to set an overall 'regional' target of 25% of all new housing to be social rented and a further 15% to be shared ownership (key worker). This target will have to be interpreted at District Council level having due regard to the other policies of need and sustainability. How these properties will be funded is not clear.

### **3.0 Tangmere Parish Plan Questionnaire**

As the first stage of producing a Parish Plan the Parish Council set up a Working Party to produce, distribute and analyse a Village Questionnaire. This was sent out to 1,100 households in October 2004 and within two weeks over 600 replies had been received and an initial assessment made. The results were presented at a Parish Council meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> November and at a public meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> November.

The questionnaire was wide ranging but specifically covered the issue of housing development. The community was asked their views on location, number, type and tenure of future houses:

- 32% wanted no further housing
- 57% would find up to 300 houses acceptable
- 53% thought small family homes were needed
- 26% thought large family homes were needed
- 64% believe that any new housing should be owner-occupied

- 76% would prefer any housing to go on brownfield (previously developed) sites

#### **4.0 Conclusions**

It is quiet clear that the community thinks that the proportion of social rented housing in Tangmere should not be increased . In line with policies set out in the Draft South East Plan they would like to see a better mix of properties with the majority wanting small owner occupied houses or flats. Some of these could be shared equity units for 'key workers' if the District Council can provide evidence of need, sustainability and finance. It will not be acceptable to finance 'affordable' housing by the provision of more large detached homes.

Any developments should be on brownfield land and the community should be involved at the earliest opportunity to discuss the proposals. The new planning framework is designed to increase local participation in the process and to try and reach a consensus before detailed planning permissions are sought.

The Parish Council looks forward to a more open discussion of the issue of affordable housing through the Local Development Framework. Chichester District Council will need to consider the following points carefully:

- Where is the greatest need for affordable housing?
- Where can it be provided in a sustainable manner close to services and employment?
- What role can the employers of 'key workers' play in providing land for their staff?
- How will affordable housing be funded?
- How will it be demonstrated that Parish housing needs will be satisfied?
- Will the decision making process for the LDF be transparent and open?