

Information for the Exmoor Area Panel 12th September 2017

Housing Needs Surveys on Exmoor

Many communities on Exmoor are aware of local people who are being forced to move away from the village in which they grew up because they are unable to find the accommodation they need locally. This could be because of high house prices or because the sort of accommodation they require is not available (For example there are very few one bedroom properties in rural areas but this is often the size of home that is required particularly by young people leaving home for the first time to live independently). Other types of need include people wanting to downsize and also people who want to build their own homes.

A Housing Need Survey is the best way of discovering if there is a local housing need and what types and sizes of homes are needed is to carry out a local housing need survey. This will identify if there is anyone living in the parish and neighbouring parishes with a housing need. The housing need survey consists of a paper questionnaire which is delivered to all households with questions about peoples current housing and what they need and want for the future.

A person or a household is considered to be in need of affordable housing if they do not have enough income and savings to be able to buy or rent a suitable property on the open market in their parish. In addition, they must be able to pass Exmoor National Park Authority's local connection test, which is to have lived during the last 10 years in the parish or neighbouring parishes (or up to 30 years if returning to the area). They could also be working in the parish or neighbouring parish in a job of value to the local community.

Because of these criteria some very personal information is collected. This is kept confidential and will not be disclosed at any time. Agreement will be gained from responders before passing their details onto to any other housing organisations.

There are a number of Housing Need Surveys planned for rural communities on Exmoor in the near future.

Parracombe, Martinhoe and Kentisbury and Trentishoe: This survey will be delivered to householders in these parishes at the end of September with a closing date for completion on 13th October. A report on the local housing need in these parishes should be available by the end of November.

Cutcombe, Timberscombe, Ebford, Winsford, Exton, Luxborough, Luccombe and Wooton Courtenay: This survey has been agreed with the parishes involved and we are currently applying for Big Lottery funding in order to pay for the printing and posting and costs of analysis. We hope this survey will be distributed sometime in the late autumn or early new year.

It is hoped to do a housing need survey of the "Rural Alliance" parishes which is made up of the North Devon parishes of **Arlington, Bratton Fleming, Challacombe, East Down, Goodleigh, Kentisbury & Trentishoe, Loxhore, Marwood, Shirwell and Stoke Rivers**. It was formed to provide a framework for

the future development of the area it serves, and to assess whether it was feasible for parishes to work together to provide facilities that one small parish could not deliver alone. Of these parishes, Challacombe and Kentisbury and Trentishoe fall fully or partially within Exmoor. This survey is still in the early planning stage and has yet to be agreed. No date has been set.

If you have any questions about these surveys please contact Sue Southwell on 01392 248919 x71121 or sue@devoncommunities.org.uk. Sue is the coordinator of the **Exmoor Rural Housing Network**