

Affordable Housing – Information sheet 1

At the meeting on 1st September a number of questions were asked that we was unable to answer. We have been in contact with the various bodies and here are the answers.

- **Can a Community Land Trust or other trust make use of an Exception Site?**
Yes they can BUT the process will take considerably longer because of the need to set up the trust (or get an existing trust interested) and because of the need to put the funding in place. While a trust would have the advantage of making it easier to allocate the homes to local people, they have the disadvantage of needing the selection committee to be completely impartial and this is often seen as a problem when local people are allocating housing. With SOHA doing the allocation, this element is dealt with by an external body who can impartially make a decision based solely on the criteria set out.
- **Can there be Self Build on an Exception Site?** Yes there can BUT again the self builder's funding would need to be in place and they would then need to bid for a plot. The self builder would also need to have oversight or be project managed by SOHA to ensure the build meet with all the planning and building control criteria. Self build projects on exception site typically take longer to complete. There could also be the problem of a self builder building a larger house than they were entitled to under the SODC rules and not being allowed to live in it as this route is seen by some as a means of getting around the rules for housing. A possible half-way position would be for SOHA to build the shell and for the self builder to fit it out. This has the problem of agreeing what a fair rent would be.
- **What are the allocation rules for Exception Sites?** The applicant must be on the housing list; they must have a local connection which usually means one or more of the following:
 - They have lived in the Parish for 5 out of the last 8 years
 - A parent or child is current living in the Parish and has been a resident for at least 10 years
 - They have worked full time for 2 years in the Parish (or the equivalent part time)

If there are more applicants than houses then the normal housing allocation rules apply. There would be a planning condition to ensure that the houses continue to be allocated on the same basis when they become vacant in the future.

Overall, the responses from both SOHA and ORCC are that the quickest and simplest way to get the Affordable Housing project delivered is to continue with the standard model.

We are awaiting more responses and these will be published when we get them.