

# Uttlesford District Council Rural Housing Schemes: An Evaluation



June 2014

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## Introduction

Uttlesford is a predominantly rural sparsely populated district in North West Essex with 32,862 dwellings and a population of approximately 89,000. Housing demand in the rural parts of the District is steadily increasing and exception site opportunities need to be maximised by the Council.

There are many challenges that need to be overcome in the rural parts of the District. These include:

- Lack of movement of householders
- Low volume of housing
- Lack of services
- Poor transport links
- Difficulty engaging the community in some local areas

It is also largely due to high house prices in Uttlesford. Current research showed that it was more expensive to live in the rural areas and it has been suggested that there is an increased need for subsidised housing especially in the much higher priced rural areas (Hometrack Research 2014).

In April 2014, the average price of a flat in Uttlesford was £139,949 meaning that 47% of residents are priced out of the market at 3 times their income, 40% at 3.5 times their income and 33% at 4.9 times their income.

The average income for those living and working in the District is £515 per week whilst the income for those who live here but work outside of the District is much higher, with an average income of £654 per week. This is due to the good train links with London and being able to command a higher salary there.

Local people are being priced out of the area they grew up in so are now looking for affordable rented or shared ownership in the rural parts of the District to stay close to family and the area they have grown up in.

However we have a good track record of delivering rural affordable housing with our partners and have enabled in partnership with them, 228 rural affordable housing units since 1989. We also have a good relationship with the Rural Housing Enabler working for the Rural Community Council for Essex. Further rural development is being provided through greater community consultation, parish planning, greater involvement and capacity building within the local community.

## **Our Rural Excellence Work**

Uttlesford District Council has been successful in working in partnership to provide affordable rural housing for over 20 years. When we were selected to take part in the Rural Excellence programme in 2008, we decided to carry out an evaluation of our rural schemes and explore some of the following questions:

- What are the benefits of such schemes?
- Are the objectives for developing such schemes met?
- What impact have such schemes had on the local communities?
- Were the mechanisms and processes for creating them adequate and successful?
- By looking at how they have worked, can we learn from successes and failures so as to better inform and influence housing and planning policies in the future?

The findings were very useful in planning new developments, liaising with Parish Councils and dispelling the myths of affordable housing. In 2014, we decided to update our findings as many more schemes have completed and the results follow.

## **Methodology and Process**

In attempting to answer some of the questions posed previously, the research and analysis asked questions devised to test the following criteria and assumptions about rural housing schemes:

- That rural local needs housing schemes provide affordable housing for local people.
- That housing is available for a range of tenures.
- That the housing is available for local people who otherwise would not be able to stay in the area.
- That the schemes are solely for local people who qualify by meeting set criteria for a local connection and that these criteria are adhered to.
- That schemes are usually developed on exception sites where development would otherwise not normally be permitted.
- That need was shown by a local housing needs survey.
- That need was shown as defined by the District Council.
- That the housing must remain in perpetuity for the local community.
- That they contribute to the belief that a rural community needs a 'good mix' of age groups to be balanced and thriving.
- That schemes are well sited and designed in relation to the rest of the village.
- That schemes should contribute to and benefit from the sustainability of local services.
- That they benefit a community by helping to ensure the future viability of local amenities.

- That schemes were developed with the full co-operation and support of and in full consultation with the Parish Council.
- That schemes were well managed causing no problems to near-by residents.

Taking the above as objectives, the initial research was carried out by:

- (a) 100% questionnaire delivered “ by hand” of all householders of the rural housing schemes

at:-

Ardley Crescent, Hatfield Heath

All Saints Close, Ashdon

Boreham Court, High Easter

Bowker Close, Newport

Little Maypole, Thaxted

Long Hide, Leaden Roding

Nettleditch, Littlebury

Oxleys Close, Clavering

Ravenscroft. Wimbish

Sparrows, Langley

- (b) A postal questionnaire of the Parish Councils in the above areas.
- (c) A questionnaire delivered “by hand” to the nearest residents of the completed schemes.

## **Survey Responses - Residents**

The survey of households in the ten schemes was 100%. Of the 125 households surveyed, 39 replied, a 31% response rate.

A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed at Appendix I.

The survey was carried out during February – March 2014

Replies were received from households on each of the ten sites, so enabling an avoidance of bias in the analysis.

## **Analysis of Scheme Resident's Questionnaire**

### **Population Balance**

One of the main issues found when looking at rural housing need is said to be young people having to leave a village because of the lack of affordable housing. This also has an effect on the local villages where primary schools are forced to close and local facilities lose custom and are no longer viable.

The results suggest that rural schemes in Uttlesford have been successful in countering this trend. The 39 questionnaires returned represented a population of 65 adults and 24 children aged between 0 -18, some 27% is under 18 and a further 31% of the population is aged between 18 and 35. Clearly the emphasis has been to provide housing for young people to be able to stay in the community and contribute to keeping the village alive. The comments on page 11 endorse this view.

Only 3% of respondents are over 65. This is a low figure given that the population in Uttlesford is ageing. Investigation would need to be carried out to ensure that rural housing is meeting the needs of the whole population.

### **Community Stability**

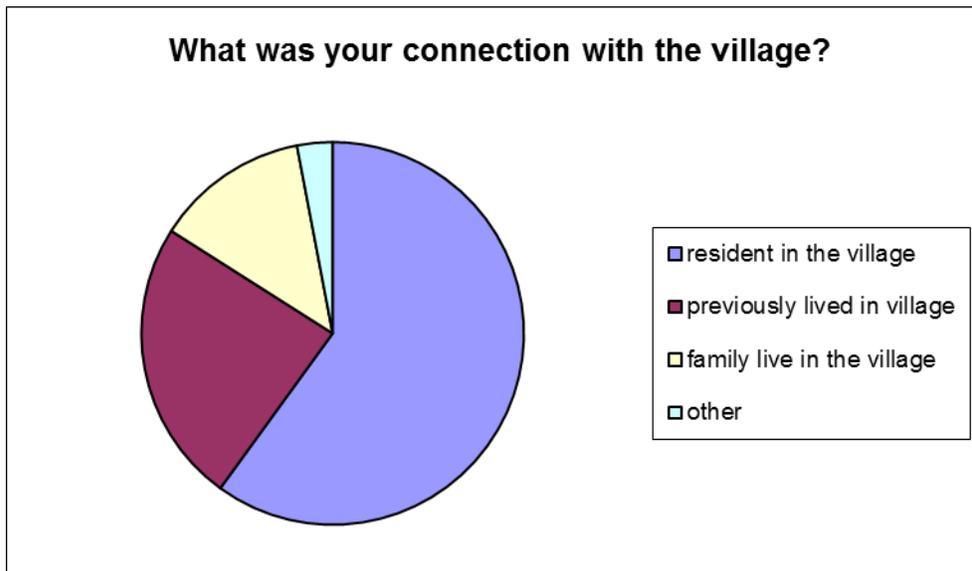
76% of respondents are first time occupiers. Many of the schemes have been there between 3 and 5 years and four schemes almost ten years. This seems to represent a high level of stability for the community and satisfaction of householders. However it may also indicate the current difficulty of those in housing need, houses on rural schemes don't become available very often and current supply may not be meeting need. This may be another area to explore.

## Local Housing for Local People

There is always a misconception that rural schemes although in principle created for local people do not end up as such. That 'outsiders' are allocated the housing either initially or on subsequent lettings.

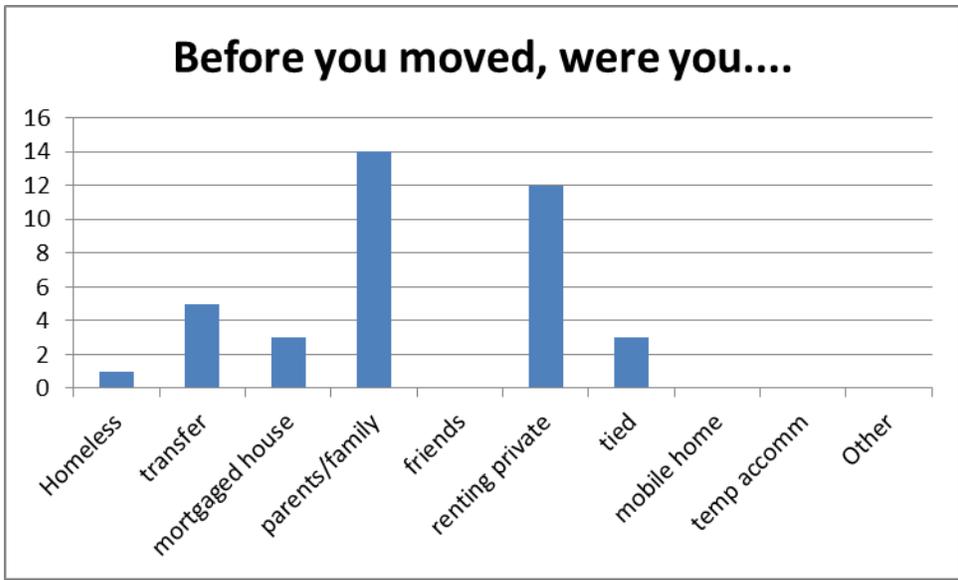
Analysis of the responses to the question 'what was your local connection' should clarify the misconceptions and indicate that the Local Authority and Housing Associations are fulfilling the criteria.

By looking at qualification by local connection, it would seem that 100% were allocated a property based on Uttlesford District Council's local connection criteria. That is although they did not live in the Parish they qualified through previous residence, employment or strong family ties. (60% were already resident in the village, 24% has previously lived in the village, and 13% had family living in the village and 3% other/not answered.)



## Need

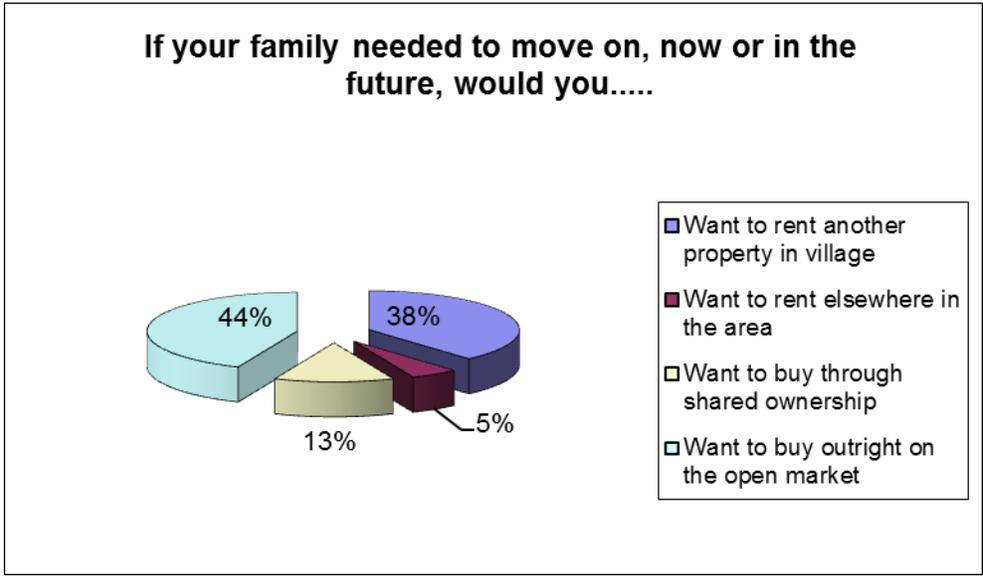
It seemed appropriate to ask respondents about their housing situation before they moved into the rural scheme. 37% were living with parents/family and friends, 32% were renting privately, much smaller numbers had transferred from other affordable social housing, were moving from a mortgaged house due to separation or were in tied accommodation.



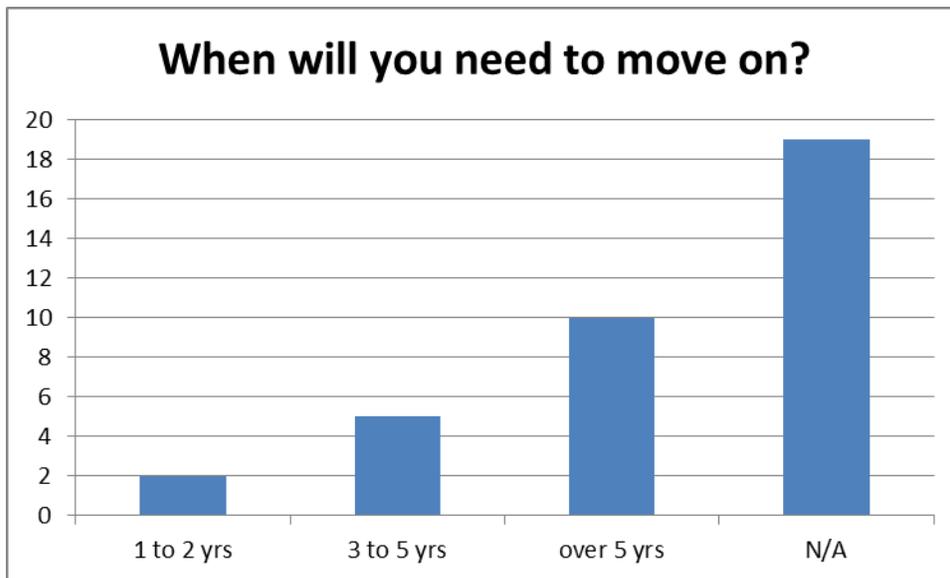
**Need by Tenure and Affordability**

In terms of tenure, 55% of forms were returned by those renting compared by 45% of those in shared ownership.

When asked about the choices connected with if the family needed to move on, 44% would prefer to buy on the open market and 13% would want shared ownership.



The survey has shown that a number of residents will need to move on in the next 5 years. This will need to be explored further with our Housing Association partners and the Parish Councils to ensure that these needs can be met on a future affordable housing site.



Those stating N/A were happy in their property and did not feel they needed to move on in the near future.

A very small proportion (5%) had experienced problems with move on. This can be an issue in rural villages due to families growing in size and a limited number of properties available.

### Community Sustainability

It is felt that rural housing schemes should be considered where they can be sustained by local services and facilities and at the same time, the additional population can add to the sustainability of those services. This is not always easy in very remote villages that have no services left but still have a need for local people wanting to live in the village they have grown up in. This means that some rural schemes will be given planning permission even though they do not have what is considered to be sufficient facilities.

To gain a picture of community sustainability, two questions were asked. One about usage of local facilities and services and one about attendance at local groups and activities.

In terms of facilities and services, the overall picture was that: -

- 25 residents used the village shops at least weekly.

- 14 residents used the post office at least weekly and a further 16 used it monthly.
- 6 residents had children that attended school daily and a further 5 residents had children that attended nursery or play school weekly.
- 7 residents used public transport throughout the month (although these all lived in Newport).
- 7 residents used the local pub weekly and a further 6 visited monthly.
- 12 residents used the local doctors surgery monthly.

This appears to show that the affordable housing has made the community more sustainable with more people using the village shop, post office, local pub, doctors surgery and school.

The evidence in relation to use of village community activities showed that 39% attended local groups. These range from mother and toddler groups, residents association, neighbourhood watch, church events/services, Newport business association, village festival committee, tennis club, Brownies/Guides/Cubs/Beavers and many more. This shows that residents living in the affordable housing are very much part of village life and help ensure that groups are kept alive.

### **Benefit to the local community**

Perhaps one key test should be the response to the question, do you think that your housing scheme has benefited the local community? 84% were positive. Rather than analyse and comment on these responses, they are presented as verbatim as the views of the people and testimony to the positive benefits of rural housing schemes.

### **Comments made:**

- Allowing people to stay local and use and participate in groups and activities
- It has kept local families in the village. Their children attend the local school and they use the shop, doctors etc. Thus keeping the village alive and not a retirement haven!
- Our residents have set up selling sites for the village, run the baby and toddler group, provide staff who work at the school, nursery and shop.
- Thriving village school thanks to young families being able to afford to live/stay in the village. Village shop, garage and pub must benefit too.

- Without this scheme I couldn't have afforded to stay here and bring my daughter up in the village I grew up in.
- Brought families closer together, improved child numbers at local school. Brought in £ to local businesses.
- It has enabled people to stay living close to their families
- It has given the people that were born or grew up in the village the chance to come back and live and look after elderly relatives.
- Providing affordable housing to people who otherwise couldn't afford to stay living in Newport.
- Brought the immediate community together
- Allowed many people to stay/live in the village when they would otherwise would have had to move to lower cost areas (us included)
- The development is for local people.

### **Residents Problems on Rural Housing Schemes**

The following replies are taken from the additional comments box on the questionnaire. Again they are presented as found but the following summarise key issues:

- Some poor quality building work
- Parking
- Heating issues on one scheme

### **All Comments made:**

- Driveways could be larger, most families have two cars and once your children grow up. They have their own cars too.
- Leaking back door and problem with boiler
- Issues with boiler and roof leaking
- Drainage
- Insufficient heating at first
- Heating issues, loose tiles in recent winds
- No adequate heating which has caused mould and mildew, poor build quality, extortionate utility bills, minimal support from housing association, constantly cold, avg 14 degrees.
- Walls better insulated/sound proofed
- Parking issues that are being dealt with by the Housing Association at present.
- Parking with a growing family who all have their own cars and only have two spaces
- Staircase coming away, manhole/drain cover half way under fence.

*(These issues have been taken up with the relevant Housing Association managing the properties to ensure that these problems are rectified)*

### **Improvements that could be made in future schemes**

The survey asked residents what else they would have liked to have been included on the development/in the property. The following comments were made:

A garage  
Space for a dishwasher  
A playground/green area for children to play  
Solar panels/ground source heat pump for water/energy use  
Small shop and a post box  
Happy with property  
Visitor parking spaces  
Window in the bathroom  
Numbered parking spaces  
No further development on the site  
Opportunity to extend into the roof space, more equal garden sizes, more kitchen cupboards  
More attention to safety – we have no footpaths and a new development will share our road  
Small play area  
Central heating as storage heaters are expensive to run.  
Adequate heating not a dysfunctional villavent system.  
Downstairs toilet  
Play area  
Open fire/woodburner  
Post box/public telephone  
A water tank as everything is run off a boiler  
Allocated parking spaces  
Visitors parking spaces, pond for wildlife, native species incorporated into landscaping.  
Bigger kitchen  
Visitors parking  
Play area/bbq area

It also asked if there was anything about the design of the property that residents would like to change. The following comments were made:

- Close to flood plain
- Space for a dishwasher
- Open plan layout
- 3 bedroom houses should have master ensuite

- Better orientated for solar gain.
- Under floor heating, better insulation
- Allocated parking
- Oil tank should be at side of the property not in the garden
- Bigger kitchen (kitchen/dining room rather than dining room/lounge)
- Turn the house around, no one uses the front door as carport is at the back.
- More parking
- Better layout to kitchen, larger garden, downstairs layout
- No, great houses!
- Make the houses affordable to maintain, wood panelling and wooden windows will need painting – expensive!
- Heating system, use of renewable technology, independent oil supply to modern boiler/heating. Poorly designed and located klargester effluent system.
- Position of front doors, higher dividing fences, defined parking spaces
- Garden design not very good, quite steep and unsuitable for children or elderly
- Window in the bathroom
- Fine as is
- More storage
- A third bedroom
- Conversion of loft to make it a 2 bedroom property, a more private way of getting into the garden
- Back door leading into the garden
- Garden layout in flats is not conducive to getting residents outside in their gardens
- Oil tank at bottom of garden
- Box in pipes, layout of kitchen

These comments will be fed back to the Housing Associations and we will consider them when planning future affordable housing developments.

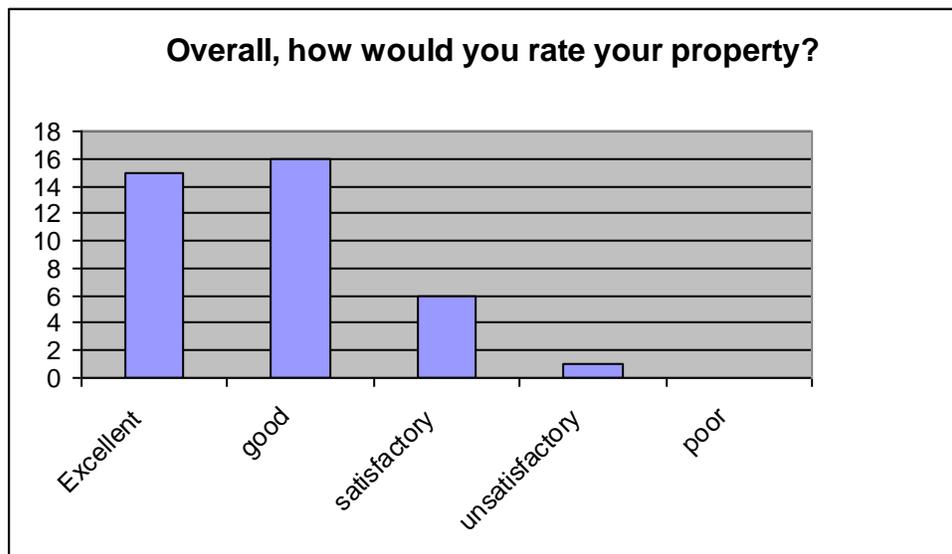
### **Any additional comments**

- I love my home, I have great neighbours and I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.
- Love being back in my home village, seeing family and lifelong friends, excellent eco saving devices, Housing association listen and respond to residents views.
- We enjoy living here, our children go to the local primary school. We have the park and the children all play together.
- If people don't want to mix that's fine knowing less is sometimes preferable! The pressure to keep up with the Jones' is stressful to some.
- Lovely location, close to school, good community spirit, shame Housing Association does not support its tenants.

- We have a wonderful community as it's a close with no through traffic the 16 children play out on the green (a must have for new developments) and this gets our street talking and makes us a community.
- Shared ownership housing has allowed us to get our feet on the housing ladder, whilst remaining in the area. We are very grateful for this.
- For us OAP's, try and keep the affordability costs low.
- Build more of them – more shared ownership
- I feel very lucky to be living in Bowker Close and I am most grateful to have been chosen to live in one of the rented properties.

## Conclusions

The final question residents were asked was “Overall how do you rate your property?” 39% stated it was excellent, 42% stated it was good, 16% stated it was satisfactory and 3% stated it was unsatisfactory. Poor received no marks. These are very high percentages and show how happy residents are with their new homes. The scheme which gained the unsatisfactory rating does have problems with heating and water and we are working with the Housing Association to rectify these issues.



## **Analysis of Parish Council Questionnaire**

Questionnaires were sent to ten Parish Councils who have had affordable housing built in their village

- Newport Parish Council, Bowker Close
- Ashdon Parish Council, All Saints Close
- Hatfield Heath Parish Council, Ardley Crescent
- Clavering Parish Council, Oxleys Close
- High Easter Parish Council, Boreham Court
- Littlebury Parish Council, Nettleditch
- Thaxted Parish Council, Little Maypole
- Leaden Roding Parish Council, Long Hide
- Wimbish Parish Council, Ravenscroft
- Langley Parish Council, Sparrows

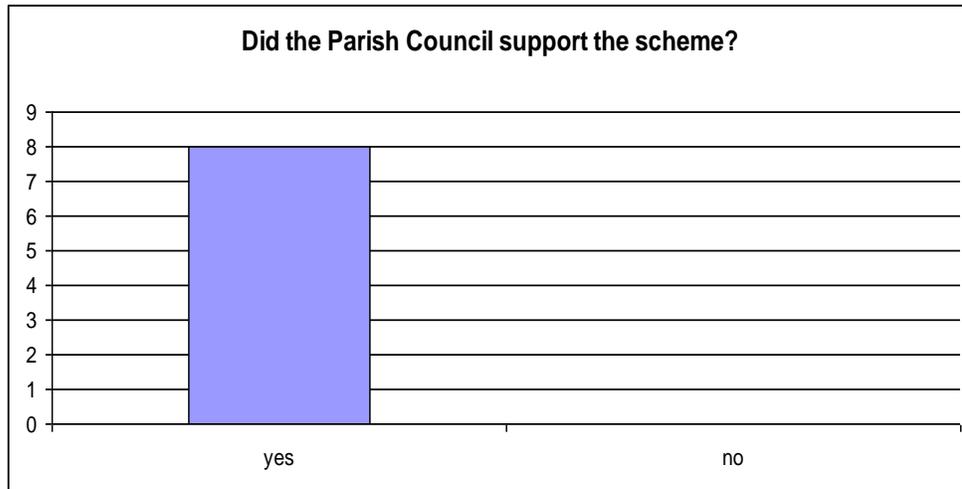
Eight Parish Councils responded and a summary of their comments is outlined below. A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed at Appendix 2.

### **Consultation**

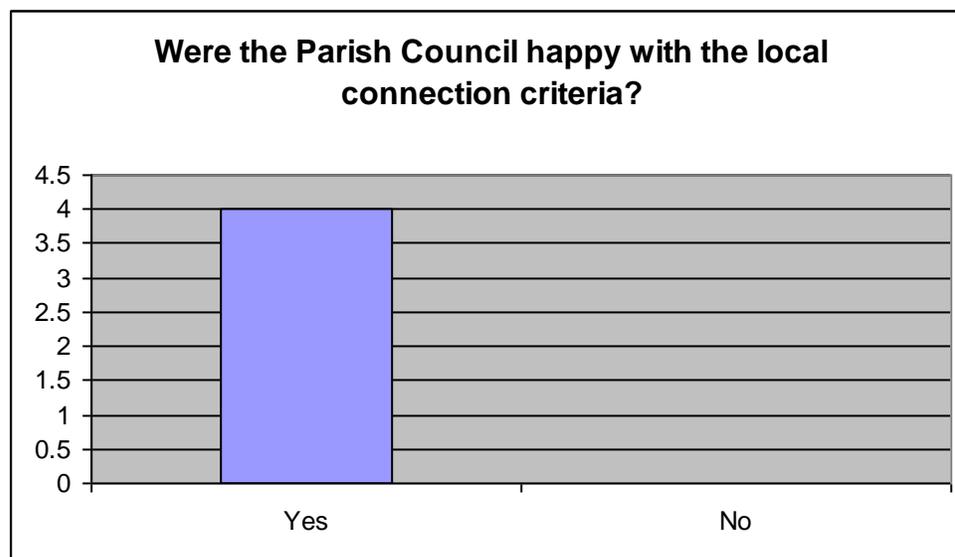
It has long been recognised that for affordable housing to be successfully developed it must have the support of the Parish Council and local people. There are many misconceptions about affordable housing with regard to the people who will be tenants, the type of homes that will be built and the way that the tenants would take care of their homes.

It is therefore important that the Council and the Housing Association consult and involve the Parish Council and local residents to break down any prejudices that may exist.

We asked the Parish Councils if they were consulted/involved in the scheme, whether they supported the scheme, did they have any input, were they informed of/and happy with the local connection criteria and were they happy that the allocations criteria were adhered to when making the allocation.



All of the parishes confirmed that they were consulted on the proposed affordable scheme. Many of them had approached the rural housing provider to investigate the provision of rural housing in their village. All of them supported the scheme from the start.

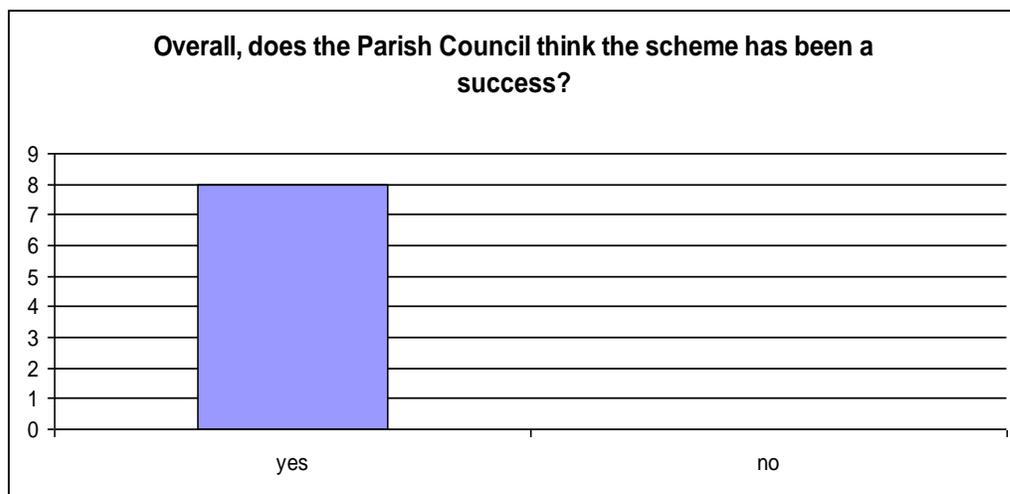


They were also consulted on and agreed with the local connection criteria and indeed this was an important issue because one of the main reasons cited for supporting a development was that it would provide homes for local people.

Seven of the eight parishes became very pro-active in the process and were involved in the identification of possible sites with the Housing Association.

Seven of the eight of the Parish Councils were happy that the properties were being allocated to local people. One of the Parishes was concerned that subsequent lets were to those outside of their Parish. This can become a problem when a parish has more than one affordable housing scheme built and a property becomes vacant. If there is not a suitable local person wanting the property, it will be offered to the surrounding parishes, this is agreed through the planning process and is discussed with the Parish Council when progressing a scheme.

We asked the Parish Councils if they were happy with the way the Housing Association manages and maintains the homes, only one was concerned as they had received complaints about the heating system when the properties were completed. The scheme concerned has been mentioned earlier in this report and changes are being made to rectify the issues.



All of the parishes surveyed felt the scheme had been a success.

**The following comments were made about the schemes by the Parish Councils:**

- Provided local homes for local people which have been greatly appreciated by local people.
- A lovely community in the close – young families growing.
- Very important to support local housing for local people.
- Important for the PC to deliver an eco friendly scheme, house local people in affordable homes, important for village school.

**Conclusions**

All of the parishes surveyed felt the scheme had been a success and 75% of them felt that there was a need for a further scheme in the future. They felt that

residents were happy in their new homes, it had kept local people in the village and the house design and build was of a good standard.

## **Analysis of questionnaire to local resident's adjoining affordable rural housing schemes.**

One of the biggest barriers when building an affordable housing scheme is the opposition created by local residents to the scheme.

It was decided to survey local residents who lived next to and opposite seven of the ten developments included in this research. Three of the developments were not included as they were next to the village shop, playing fields or employment units and no apparent neighbours to discuss the development with.

We delivered 70 questionnaires "by hand" and received 9 replies, a response rate of 13%. Of these 3 did not live in their properties when the homes were built. The response rate is not statistically reliable and the results should be used with caution. The lack of responses could be an indicator that local residents are happy with the scheme and do not have cause for concern. A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed at Appendix 3.

2 of the 6 respondents didn't support the scheme before it was built, however all of the respondents have remained in their homes despite their concerns.

5 of the 6 respondents knew that the scheme was for local people and 2 of them stated that the scheme had assisted their family or friends. With 4 stating that they had a future need in their household for affordable housing.

### **Please explain why you think it has or has not been a success?**

The following replies are taken from the additional comments box on the questionnaire. Again they are presented as found:

#### **All Comments made:**

- ❖ It has enabled families to be close thus securing support networks for young and old.
- ❖ Nineteen households have been created which would not have existed otherwise. We know of two households who have been enabled to move into the accommodation who would otherwise have had to leave the village or continue living with their parents.
- ❖ Still too expensive for most people in the village especially youngsters
- ❖ New houses have problems with sewage, low cost housing is not low cost, residents are not local people.
- ❖ People who live there are very much part of the community.

- **Do you think the development has integrated into the existing community?**

The following replies are taken from the additional comments box on the questionnaire. Again they are presented as found:

- It is good to see the next generation making use of the village facilities and building the future of the village.
- Yes, individuals from the site are involved in matters within the village. Those who moved within the village have retained their links with the village.
- Yes, it is a very good scheme.
- It's better than what was there.
- By placing the new properties on the edge of the town, it is harder to integrate into the community, where there are brownfield sites in town.

### **Conclusion**

The building of affordable homes on what are usually greenfield sites can cause controversy and some very strong feelings from local residents. However the results from this survey indicate that the majority felt the development was a success. The lack of responses received by the Council could also suggest that local residents are happy with the properties built around their homes.

These results should encourage and reassure parish councils who are considering supporting an “affordable housing scheme”.

## **Overall Conclusions**

To summarise, the key learning points from the conclusions drawn from the report are:

### **1. FROM TENANTS**

- The schemes allowed young people to remain in the village.
- They provided homes for people employed locally.
- The homes were affordable for those on lower incomes.
- The residents used village services and helped the local economy.
- They became involved in village activities

### **2. FROM PARISH COUNCILS**

- All of the Parish Councils were pleased with the design of the schemes and the way they fitted into the village.
- They believed the key to success was full and constant consultation with the village through the Parish Council.
- They were insistent that the homes were available for local people only

### **3. FROM RESIDENTS ADJOINING AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEMES**

- A very low response rate that could mean that residents do not have concerns about the affordable housing built close to their homes.

## FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The final and overriding conclusion must be that the resources invested in rural housing schemes in Uttlesford have resulted in long term economic, social and environmental improvement for the householders and the community. This positive impact has been made possible because of the high level of consultation between all those involved in the process. This includes Housing Associations, Uttlesford District Council's Housing and Planning Departments, the Parish Councils and local residents.

The undoubted success of the schemes in this research makes the case for bringing forward further schemes, where there is a proven need, and justifies the Council's pro-active policy towards delivering a rural housing programme with the support of Parish Councils.

*For further information about this research or the delivery of affordable rural housing, please contact Suzanna Wood or Stephanie Baxter*

01799 510543/510633

Or by email: [swood@uttlesford.gov.uk/sbaxter@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:swood@uttlesford.gov.uk/sbaxter@uttlesford.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 –

12<sup>th</sup> February 2014

*Our ref: SLW085*

Please ask for Suzanna Wood on 01799 510543  
email: [swood@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:swood@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Dear Resident,

### **RURAL HOUSING IMPACT STUDY IN UTTLESFORD**

I am writing to you to ask for your help. Uttlesford District Council are conducting an independent survey on the impact that affordable housing schemes (Housing Association) for local people, have on the village in which they are built.

This is an important survey because it may influence the Council's support for these schemes in the future.

I enclose a confidential questionnaire, which I have sent to those living in your affordable housing development. I have also sent questionnaires to eleven other village schemes in Uttlesford.

I would be grateful if you would spend a few minutes completing this questionnaire and returning it to me in the prepaid envelope provided.

I would like to stress that the survey is independent and the names of tenants completing these questionnaires will be kept confidential and would only be known to the Housing Policy team

Other organisations, including Housing Associations, Parish Councils and the District Council are also being interviewed and this information will be included in a report, which should be available in May 2014.

I would therefore be grateful if you could return the questionnaire by the 17<sup>th</sup> March. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any aspect of the questionnaire.

I thank you in anticipation of your support.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanna Wood  
Planning and Housing Policy Manager

**Uttlesford District Council  
Rural Excellence Rural Housing Survey**

Questionnaire for Residents

**1. Please complete your address and contact number in the box below**

**2. Please give details of people living in your home**

(Please write number of people in the box provided)

Number of adults: Under 21  21-25  26-35  36-55  56-65  Over 65

Number of children: Pre-School  Primary  Secondary  Over 16

**3. Were you the first occupier of your home?**

Yes  No

**4. How long have you lived at this address?**

Less than 1 year  1 – 2 years  3 – 5 years  Over 5 years

**5. Are you:** a. Tenant?  b. Shared ownership resident?

**6. Where did you live before moving to this property?  
(Name of village or town)**

**7. Before you moved to this property were you:**

- Homeless
- Transferred from another housing association or council property
- Living in a mortgaged house
- Living with parents/family
- Living with friends
- Renting privately
- Tied accommodation with employment
- Mobile home
- Living in temporary accommodation (hostel B&B)
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**8. How long did you have to wait before you were housed?**

- Under 6 months
- 6 – 12 months
- 12 – 18 months
- 18 – 24 months
- Over 2 years

**9. What was your connection with the village?**

- Resident
- Previous resident
- Employment
- Family
- None
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. If you needed to move on from your current accommodation, when do you expect this will be?**

- 1 to 2 years       3 to 5 years       Over 5 years       N/A

**11. If your family needed to move on, now or in the future, for any reason, (e.g. house does not meet needs) would you?**

- Want to rent another property in the village
- Want to rent elsewhere in the Uttlesford area
- Want to buy through shared ownership
- Want to buy on the open market

**12. Have you experienced any problems with the need to move on?**

Yes  No

If 'Yes' please state why:

**12(a) if you do need to move on, please give your reasons.**

**13. Do you or your family use the local facilities?**

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never	N/A
Village Shop	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Village Post Office	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Village Hall	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Village Pub	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Play Group	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Nursery School	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Primary School	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Petrol Station/Garage	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Doctors Surgery	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Chemist	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Public Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Other local shops/facilities

**14. Do you or any members of your family; attend any local groups, organisations or clubs?**

Yes  No

If 'Yes', please specify:

**15. Do you think that this housing development has benefited the local community?**

Yes  No

If 'Yes', please say how:

**16. Have you experienced any problems with the development?**

Yes  No

If 'Yes', please specify:

**17. What else would you like to have been included on the development/ in the property? Please provide comments:**

**18. Is there anything about the design of the property that you would like to change?**  
Please provide comments:

**19. Overall, how would you rate your property?**

Excellent

Good

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

Poor

Comments:

**19. Do you think the development is a good place to live?** Please provide comments:

**20. Do you think the development has integrated into the existing community?**  
Please provide comments:

21. Any additional comments.

**Would you be willing to undertake a short follow-up interview if required?**

Yes

No

Thank you for answering this questionnaire, please return it in the enclosed reply paid envelope.

## Appendix 2

24<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Please ask for Suzanna Wood 01799 510543  
email: [swood@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:swood@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Dear

### *RURAL HOUSING IMPACT STUDY IN UTTLESFORD*

I am writing to you to ask for your help. Uttlesford District Council are conducting an independent survey on the impact that affordable housing schemes (Housing Association) for local people, have on the village in which they are built.

This is an important survey because it may influence the Council's support for these schemes in the future.

I enclose a confidential questionnaire, which I have sent to you and ten other Parish Councils who have had affordable housing built in their villages.

I would be grateful if you would spend a few minutes completing this questionnaire and returning it to me in the prepaid envelope provided.

I would like to stress that the survey is independent and the names of tenants completing these questionnaires will be kept confidential and would be known only to the Housing Policy team.

We will also be interviewing Housing Associations, the tenants of the scheme in your village and others, in an effort to get a real assessment of the benefits of affordable housing in villages. This information will be included in a report, which should be available in May 2014.

I would therefore be grateful if you could return the questionnaire by the 28<sup>th</sup> March. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you wish to discuss any aspect of the questionnaire.

I thank you in anticipation of your support.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanna Wood  
Planning and Housing Policy Manager



**Uttlesford District Council  
Rural Excellence Rural Housing Survey  
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARISH COUNCILS**

**RURAL HOUSING AT:**

**1. Were the Parish Council consulted/involved in the scheme?**

Yes  No

**2. Did the Parish Council support the scheme?**

Yes  No

**3. Did the Parish Council have any input into the selection of the site?**

Yes  No

**3 (a) If the answer to Question 3 is yes, what was your input?**

**4. Were the Parish Council informed of the local connection criteria required for tenants?**

Yes

No

**5. Were the Parish Council happy with the local connection criteria?**

Yes

No

**6. Are the Parish Council happy that the houses have been allocated to tenants with a local connection to the village?**

Yes

No

**6(a) If not why?**

**7. Are the Parish Council involved in the re-let/re-sale of the properties?**

Yes

No

**8. Are the Parish Council happy with the choice of Housing Association?**

Yes

No

**8 (a) If the answer to Question 8 is No, please explain why.**

**9. Is the Parish Council happy with the way the Housing Association manages and maintains the homes?**

Yes

No

**9(a) If the answer to Question 9 is No, please explain why.**

**10. Did the Parish Council have any concerns about the scheme before it was built?**

Yes

No

**10(a) If the answer to Question 10 is Yes, what were their concerns?**

**10(b) If the answer to Question 10 is Yes, were their concerns justified?**

Yes

No

**11. Overall does the Parish Council think the scheme has been a success?**

Yes

No

**12. Please explain why you think it has or has not been a success**

**13 Do the Parish Council think there is a need for a further scheme of this kind in the future?**

Yes

No

**13(a) If the answer to question 13 is Yes, please state how far in the future you think this will be.**

**Signed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Designation:** \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for answering this questionnaire; please return it in the enclosed reply paid envelope.

## Appendix 3

12<sup>th</sup> February 2014

*Our ref: SLW085*

Please ask for Suzanna Wood on 01799 510543  
email: [swood@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:swood@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Dear Resident,

### **RURAL HOUSING IMPACT STUDY IN UTTLESFORD**

I am writing to you to ask for your help. Uttlesford District Council are conducting an independent survey on the impact that affordable housing schemes (Housing Association) for local people, have on the village in which they are built.

This is an important survey because it may influence the Council's support for these schemes in the future.

I enclose a confidential questionnaire, which I have sent to residents close to the affordable housing scheme in your village.

I would be grateful if you would spend a few minutes completing this questionnaire and returning it to me in the prepaid envelope provided.

I would like to stress that the survey is independent and the names of residents completing these questionnaires will be kept confidential and would be known only to the Housing Policy team. Alternatively, if you do not want to give your name, just enter the road name and this will suffice.

Other organisations, including Housing Associations, Parish Councils and the District Council are also being interviewed and this information will be included in a report, which should be available in May 2014.

I would therefore be grateful if you could return the questionnaire by the 17<sup>th</sup> March. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any aspect of the questionnaire.

I thank you in anticipation of your support.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanna Wood  
Planning and Housing Policy Manager



**Uttlesford District Council  
Rural Excellence Rural Housing Survey**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NEIGHBOURS TO THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME  
AT:**

**1. Name and Address (optional)**

**2. Did you live at your present address before the homes at All Saints Close were built?**

Yes

No

**3. If you answered Yes to Question 2 -  
Did you know that they were Housing Association houses for local people?**

Yes

No

**4. Did you support the scheme before it was built?**

Yes

No

**5. Did you have any concerns about the scheme before it was built?**

Yes

No

**6. If the answer to Question 5 is yes, what were your concerns?**

**7. If the answer to Question 5 is yes, have those concerns been justified?**

Yes  No

**8. Has the development assisted any of your family and/or friends?**

Yes  No

**9. Does anyone in your household have a future need for affordable housing?**

Yes  No

**10. Overall, do you think the scheme has been a success?**

Yes  No

**11. Please explain why you think it has or has not been a success.**

**10. Do you think the development has integrated into the existing community?  
(Give your reasons)**

**Thank you for answering this questionnaire, please return it in the enclosed reply paid envelope**