

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

November 2008

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1 Introduction: Purpose and Status

- 1.1** The Council has produced a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on the provision of affordable housing in the District following the adoption of the Stroud District Local Plan. It replaces earlier guidance produced in September 2003. The Council attaches high priority to the provision of affordable housing in balancing its planning objectives. It is an increasingly important local issue, for example it is identified as a Key Issue by the Local Strategic Partnership in its Community Strategy. It is one of the key priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy Statement. A full range of housing opportunities will also assist in providing balanced communities.
- 1.2** This SPD explains in more detail the affordable housing policies contained in the Council's Local Plan (policies HN4, HN5 and HN6) and is designed primarily as a practical guide for those who develop housing in Stroud District. It is consistent with the Local Plan and government guidance including Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3).
- 1.3** The Housing Needs of Stroud District are detailed in the Council's Housing Needs Survey (HNS), part of larger countrywide Housing Needs Assessment for Gloucestershire. Both documents and an update are published on the council's website. Housing need is regularly monitored and annual updates produced. Previous Housing Need Assessments reflected Government good practice in place at the time; this information is now being superseded by the emerging Gloucestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 1.4** The SPD was the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal and the basis for full Public Consultation. This document reflects consultation feedback. It was adopted in November 2008.
- 1.5** The Stroud District is an attractive area with high house prices, which means the purchase of an appropriate home is often beyond the means of potential buyers, particularly those residents on low incomes. This SPD is one mechanism by which the Council can improve the supply of affordable dwellings in association with appropriate residential developments.
- 1.6** The issue of affordable housing is highlighted in the Council's:
- Local Plan for the Stroud District, as adopted in November 2005.
 - Strategy for Housing.
 - Annual Housing Investment Programme.
 - Housing Needs Surveys.
 - Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy.
 - Corporate Delivery Plan.
 - Emerging Gloucestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- 1.7** Where a need for affordable housing has been established, Central Government policy allows Local Authorities to secure the provision of affordable housing through the planning process. This SPD has been prepared in accordance with this guidance and housing policies, and

Regional Planning Guidance, as set out in Section 3 of this guidance. It sets out the planning procedures that the Council will adopt in relation to proposals for new housing development and associated affordable housing provision.

- 1.8** An explanation of the mechanisms for providing affordable housing is contained in Appendix 3 'Developers' Guide to the Mechanisms for the Provision of Affordable Housing'. It includes the arrangements for providing social housing in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and other Affordable Housing Providers.
- 1.9** The SPD needs to be considered in the context of the Council's statutory duties as a planning authority, the availability of financial and other resources and regional and national policy agendas.
- 1.10** The provision of affordable housing will normally result in a cost to Developers, which can only be offset if the affordable housing requirement is taken into account in negotiating land options / purchase. Valuers and Landowners should be aware that affordable housing provision will almost certainly have implications for the price of land.
- 1.11** A glossary of commonly used words in this SPD is included in Appendix 10 'Glossary of Terms'.

2 What is Affordable Housing?

2.1 PPS3: Housing

This replaces earlier guidance from Government and contains the following definition of affordable housing:

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
- Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is:

Rented housing owned and managed by Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)⁽¹⁾ for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. The proposals set out in the Three Year Review of Rent Restructuring (July 2004) were implemented as policy in April 2006. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the Local Authority or with the Housing Corporation as a condition of grant.

Intermediate affordable housing is:

Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above⁽²⁾. These can include shared equity products (e.g. HomeBuy), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

2.2 Key Workers

The Government's definitions of key worker only includes those groups eligible for the Housing Corporation funded Key Worker Living Programme and others employed within the public sector (i.e. outside of this programme) identified by the Regional Housing Body for assistance (see <http://www.southwesthousingbody.org.uk>). Further details are also provided on the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) website at <http://www.dclg.gov.uk>

1 Rented housing can be provided, owned, and managed by other individuals or organisations under equivalent arrangements agreed with the Local Authority.

2 Low cost market housing i.e. the least expensive housing available for purchase in the market, does not meet the above definitions and may no longer be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

- 2.3 Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 10)** for the South West states “Affordability varies from one locality to another and from one year to another. It depends on income levels, house prices, rents, the cost of housing finance and support available to households through mortgages and other mechanisms. The South West is characterised by relatively low earnings but house prices that, overall, are close to the national average”.
- 2.4 The South West Regional Housing Strategy 2005-09** refers to ‘Affordable Housing’ as “housing sold or rented below market price, shared ownership or social rented housing”.
- 2.5 The Council's definition** of affordable housing is *'housing for people who cannot afford open market rents or prices, the housing being appropriate to their needs'* (see also Appendix 7 'A Brief Guide to Affordable Housing').

3 Planning Policy Context

Central Government Guidance

- 3.1 The Local Plan was prepared in line with the guidance available to the Council during its production.
- 3.2 PPS3 provides current guidance on issues relating to the provision of housing, and is a material consideration.

Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) for the South West

- 3.3 The current regional planning guidance for South West England (now referred to as the Regional Spatial Strategy - RSS) is set out in RPG10. This contains a broad development strategy for the period to 2016, provides the framework for other strategies and programmes and informs the delivery of the 10 year South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) regional strategy. Policy H03 deals specifically with affordable housing. The policy states the Regional Planning Body should monitor the overall provision of affordable housing against a provisional indicator of needs of 6,000 –10,000 units a year for the region. Paragraph 7.15 of RPG10 advises that the Local Plan should address the affordable housing requirements of households of different characteristics (for example: single person households, families, older people, Key Workers) and to take a realistic view about housing finance in deciding how much affordable housing can be delivered during the plan period.
- 3.4 RPG10 is being revised and a new draft RSS was the subject of an Examination in Public between April and July 2007.

Approved Gloucestershire Structure Plan

- 3.5 Policy H7 seeks the provision of affordable units for those unable to compete in the housing market, and that such units should be available to successive occupiers who need affordable accommodation. This approach is confirmed in the Structure Plan Third Alteration (including Proposed Modifications: February 2005), which remains a material planning consideration until it is superseded by the RSS.

Stroud District Local Plan

- 3.6 The Local Plan covers the period mid 1991 to mid 2011 and was adopted in November 2005. Policies in the Local Plan that seek to provide affordable housing are contained in the Housing Chapter. These have been tried and tested following a Local Plan Inquiry.
- 3.7 The policies that were adopted in November 2005 are:

- 3.8** Policy HN4 – site threshold size for seeking affordable provision
Policy HN5 – affordable provision reflecting local need
Policy HN6 – exceptions sites
Policy HN8 – defined settlements
- 3.9** The detail of these is included in Appendix 1 ‘Stroud District Local Plan Adopted Policies’.
- 3.10** The Local Plan contains a number of housing allocations distributed throughout the District. Generally, the Local Plan seeks the provision of a percentage of dwellings on suitable sites for affordable housing purposes (paragraphs 5.10.12 and 5.10.14). The current target is in Appendix 12 ‘Quick Reference Data’ and is based on the results of the latest available Housing Need Survey data, which highlights the need for affordable housing in the District.

4 Housing Need

- 4.1** The overall level of housing in the District is established by the requirements of the Structure Plan and in the future, the RSS⁽³⁾.

Structure Plan

- 4.2** The amount of total new residential development to be provided in Stroud District is set out in the approved Structure Plan. This allocates 9,400 housing units to be provided in Stroud District between 1991 and mid 2011 (average 470 units per year). At the end of March 2006, a total of 5,580 units had been built (372 net additional dwellings per annum). This means a total of 3,820 units need to be built from April 2006 to the middle of 2011, an average of 764 dwellings per annum. This will come largely from existing commitments including sites already with planning permission (2,312 units) and non-committed Local Plan housing allocations (1,584 units). A significant number are also likely to be delivered on small windfall sites.

The Gloucestershire Countrywide Housing Needs Assessment

- 4.3** Published in 2005, this identified a shortfall of affordable housing across Gloucestershire.

The Housing Need of Stroud District

- 4.4** The extent and location of the demand for affordable housing in Stroud District has been determined through the publication of District wide surveys in 1996, 1999, the 2003 update, the Countywide Assessment 2005 and its Update, 2006. Both the 2003 update and 2005 assessment accord with the Good Practice Guide. It also satisfies the Government's suggested range of Demographic, Economic and Market Data Sources. In partnership with other councils in Gloucestershire, a full Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is due for completion in early 2009, and a new Countywide Housing Needs Assessment is planned for 2009-10. Once approved, these data sources will be utilised in negotiations.
- 4.5** Survey data is monitored. There have been dramatic price rises in the market and low income levels remain in parts of the District, indicating that a high proportion of those who require affordable housing are likely to require some form of state benefit. Forms of subsidised housing for sale can meet the housing needs of some people, and reduce the levels of demand for affordable rented accommodation. Whilst there is a high level of aspiration for home ownership, the majority of those in priority housing need do not have the resources to consider ownership, or even subsidised home ownership, and affordable homes to rent continue to represent the Council's highest priority.

³ The need for affordable housing is derived from the results of local, district and county-wide housing need surveys (Appendix 12 'Quick Reference Data').

- 4.6** The Council needs to promote an appropriate range of affordable housing opportunities whilst avoiding any over-provision of affordable homes that are not accessible to those in greatest housing need.
- 4.7** Whilst the number of affordable homes secured through Affordable Housing Planning policies had increased in 2005 to its highest ever level, there had also been significantly fewer affordable private sector rentals and fewer entry-level homes sold. The actual sale price of the average entry-level property had risen, but annual household incomes remained relatively static.
- 4.8** When taking into account the reductions in availability, increases in forecast supply, and the ratios between house prices and incomes, the updated housing needs data confirms that a net shortfall in affordable housing remains. A summary of the current housing needs position is contained in Appendix 12 'Quick Reference Data'.

Key Workers

- 4.9** On behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership's Affordable Housing Syndicate, a Keyworker Study was undertaken to identify the supply and demand for Keyworker housing provision in Stroud District. This was achieved by adding a Keyworker module to the brief for the 2004 Housing Needs Survey (HNS). Some unexpected results were returned:-
- Detailed data analysis identified that one-in-seven households contained a Keyworker, but that only 12 (of all Keyworker) households planned to move within 2 years.
 - The household income of some Keyworkers (for example fire-fighters) is at a level that allows housing needs to be satisfied without assistance.
 - The Council agreed with its consultant's advice that weighting such a low number of relevant cases would not produce robust or defensible Keyworker results. As a result, the task was concluded by accepting its interim findings.
 - A minimal response and level of interest was identified from a survey circulated alongside pay-slips to employees of the Primary Care Trust.

Based on the available data, the Council is not proposing any specific policy in relation to Keyworker housing, although any Keyworkers registered in housing need would be considered in the normal way for affordable housing secured through the Council's general affordable housing policies. A copy of the Keyworker study is available on the council's website at www.stroud.gov.uk

Housing Register

- 4.10** Another indicator of the current trends is data from the Council's Housing Register. The current number of households on the register is detailed in Appendix 2 'Monitoring Housing Needs and Income Needs'.

Parish Housing Needs Surveys

4.11 Parish Councils are encouraged to undertake a housing needs survey perhaps in conjunction with a Parish Plan. Where Parish Councils have undertaken more detailed and qualitative local Parish Appraisals and Parish Plan work, and housing needs surveys are undertaken within three years of a District-wide survey, their findings will take precedence for the purpose of determining specific local needs for affordable housing. A local survey is usually required to support any affordable housing development through the Planning Exceptions Policy. Parish Councils are advised to contact the Rural Housing Enabler before undertaking such surveys to ensure the methodology is appropriate. Contact details in Appendix 8 'A checklist for Parish and Town Councils: How to Assist in the Provision of Affordable Housing'.

Special Needs and Supported Housing

4.12 The need for dwellings, which are suitable for people with special needs, and the need for accommodation with associated care and support, rely on more specific information than that contained in housing needs surveys. The Primary Care Trusts and Social Services are the main partnership agencies that provide care and support, and the County Council's Supporting People Team co-ordinate revenue funding for services provided to a range of client groups. When planning new affordable dwellings, the Council will take account of any priorities identified in the current Supporting People Strategy. This is available on the County Council's website: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk

4.13 Homes to cater for particular needs may be required. Developers are advised to contact the Council's Housing Strategy Manager at an early stage to determine if there are any requirements and how these may be accommodated. A specialist agency should be involved to provide suitable accommodation.

Strategic Housing Need

4.14 RPG 10 acknowledges at paragraph 3.15 that not all planning issues tidily match the boundaries of the administrative areas of Local Authorities or other Agencies. RPG10 advises that inter-authority consultation and co-operation on cross-boundary issues should take place. Stroud District Council works in partnership at a strategic level with its neighbouring Local Authorities, particularly where proposals for development cover a Housing Market Area that extends over more than one Local Authority administrative area. Specific advice in relation to affordable housing provision can be obtained from the Housing Strategy Manager.

5 Definitions of Affordability

- 5.1** The National Housing Federation's (NHF) current definition for rented accommodation is that: *Rents are affordable if the majority of working households taking up new tenancies are not caught in the poverty trap (because of dependency on housing benefit) or paying more than 25% of their net income in rent, including service charges.*
- 5.2** Department for Communities & Local Government guidance states: *A household is considered able to afford market housing in cases where the rent payable would constitute no more than 25% of their gross household income and on shared equity products rental & mortgage payments together should constitute no more than 30% of gross income.*
- 5.3** Whilst the Council's affordable housing policies are currently based upon a threshold of no more than 40% of net income on housing costs, it recognises the reasoning behind the NHF threshold of 25%. The Council supports this definition for low-income households so as to avoid dependency on housing benefits, and the risk of homelessness or repossession. The reality of calculating eligibility for a mortgage, by using a multiple of annual income, means that those who are not on the lowest incomes will invariably be paying more than 25% of their net income on housing costs. In seeking the provision of affordable housing, the Council needs to be assured that costs are accessible and manageable for those people who rent or purchase it.
- 5.4** The Council has adopted a benchmark for the affordability of house purchase. This takes account of the household income of potential first time buyers and existing owner occupiers with at least one regular full time income who have a need for larger accommodation (Appendix 2 'Monitoring Housing Needs and Income Needs').

District Wide House Prices

- 5.5** Land Registry house price data is used to inform policy. Land Registry Median price data for Stroud District in 2007 shows the average price of a property to be £252,791. Appendix 2 'Monitoring Housing Needs and Income Needs' includes house price monitoring data.

Local Average Earnings

- 5.6** Increases in house prices have been significantly higher than the increase in local earnings. Local earnings data show that earnings rose by a maximum of 32.9% in the period since the original Housing Needs Survey was published in 1996, which is a lot less than that of house price inflation. Appendix 2 'Monitoring Housing Needs and Income Needs' contains an income summary.

Mortgage Multipliers

- 5.7** These are currently around 3.5 times a single income and 3 times joint income. However, a part time income is most unlikely to be more than half the average single income, and more likely to be one third or even less, with a high proportion of part-time employment being the lowest paid jobs.
- 5.8** When mortgage multipliers are applied, neither single nor joint average incomes allow for a mortgage that is sufficient to access the housing market without an unusually high deposit. However, it may allow some households access to assisted forms of home ownership. Appendix 2 'Monitoring Housing Needs and Income Needs' indicates affordability for different incomes.

6 Forms of Affordable Housing

6.1 The Council has produced a useful guide on affordable housing, which can be downloaded from the Council's website and is included in Appendix 7 'A Brief Guide to Affordable Housing'. This provides an explanation about:

- Social Housing for Rent
- Discounted Home Ownership [resale covenant]
- Shared Ownership [traditional equity sharing]
- HomeBuy
 - Social HomeBuy
 - New Build HomeBuy
 - Open market HomeBuy

Overall Approach

6.2 The Council will refer to the relevant Housing Needs Survey, or require an approved Parish Plan Policy Appraisal / local Housing Needs Survey to determine the nature and mix of affordable housing sought in association with appropriate residential schemes in Stroud District. Generally speaking, the Council would expect to see proposals for affordable housing that broadly reflect the overall mix of housing in a planning application and, depending on the number and type of dwellings proposed, the affordable homes should be seamlessly integrated (rather than obviously segregated) from open market housing.

7 Thresholds and Targets for the Provision of Affordable Housing

- 7.1** The Council has adopted two thresholds that accord with PPS3; one for sites in specified urban areas, the other for sites in rural areas. These are detailed in Appendix 1 'Stroud District Local Plan Adopted Policies' and Appendix 12 'Quick Reference Data'.
- 7.2** On new sites over the site size threshold the Council's objective is to achieve affordable homes that contribute to the Local Plan target over the period 2005-2011. Additional affordable homes are also likely to be produced from windfall sites. The Council will monitor this target closely in accordance with Chapter 11 'Monitoring and Review' of this SPD.

Other Considerations on Site Thresholds

- 7.3** In deciding whether a particular site qualifies as being above the requisite site size thresholds set out above, the Council will assess not merely the proposal submitted but the potential capacity of the site. The Council will welcome proposals that make reasonably efficient use of the whole site but will be alert to any attempts to deliberately circumvent the stated site size thresholds. The density of all housing sites should be at least 30 dwellings per hectare in accordance with PPS3. In sustainable locations densities of up to 50 dwellings per hectare will be encouraged. If a site is split into two or more sites, which physically abut each other, the Council will treat any which fall below the site size thresholds as part of the larger site for the purposes of the policy.
- 7.4** On sites falling below the stated site size thresholds Developers will nevertheless be encouraged to provide an element of affordable housing, which the Council will weigh as a positive material planning consideration helping to justify approval. This approach is in accordance with the Court of Appeal Judgment in *Harry Rowlinson and Lynda Rowlinson as Trustees of the Linson Construction Pension v Warrington Borough Council and the DETR (2002)*. In this case the court held that an Inspector or any other decision maker is entitled to conclude that a substantial affordable provision (50% in this case) outweighs other material planning considerations such as the sequential test in PPG3.
- 7.5** This was also the case in *R on the application of North Wiltshire District Council v Secretary of State and Others and Chippenham Motors Limited (2007)*. The court upheld the Inspector's decision on the basis that affordable housing is potentially a material planning consideration and decision makers are entitled to attach substantial weight to it even to outweigh Development Plan policies.

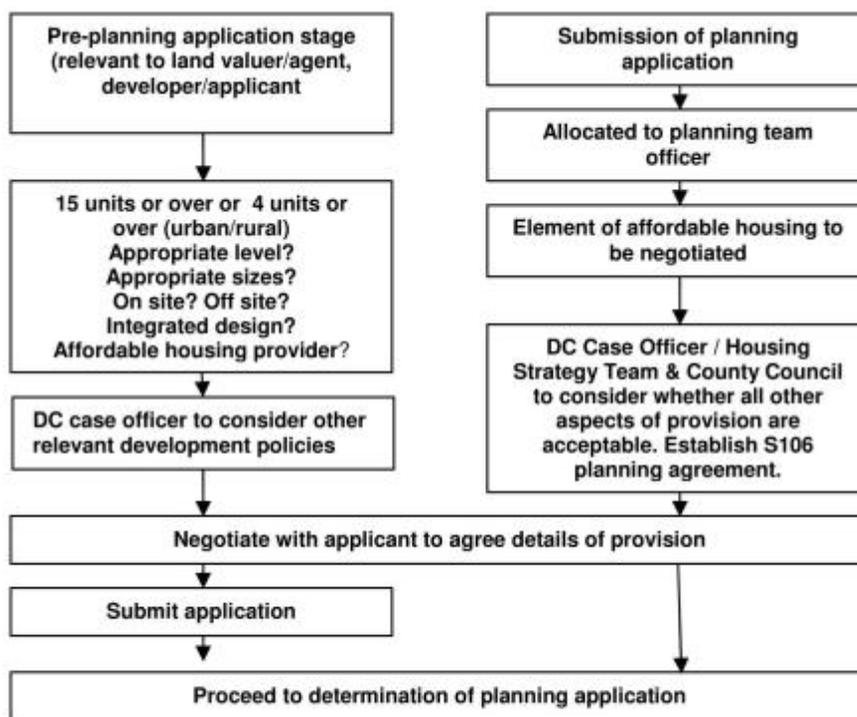
8 Community Participation

- 8.1** The Council places importance in the engagement of local communities in the process of bringing forward suitable housing sites at the application stage. Proper engagement by Developers with local residents at pre-application stage is important to develop public confidence in the house building industry, as well as to dispel misunderstanding or preconceptions. Recent changes to the planning system have emphasised the importance of public participation.
- 8.2** It is also important to encourage good practice at pre-application stage and in the provision of information to support applications. Developers are encouraged to enter into pre-application discussions with the Council. This will facilitate the expeditious determination of planning applications.
- 8.3** Developers should provide an affordable housing statement to support their planning applications. Council practice on procedures at pre-application stage, including public consultation together with information requirements for planning applications, is therefore provided in Appendix 4 'Best Practice for Pre-Application Consultation and Planning Applications'. The Council's online planning application form can be found at <http://www.stroud.gov.uk/planning>

9 Implementation of Policy

- 9.1 Decisions regarding the type of affordable housing to build on suitable sites should reflect the local housing needs and the individual site’s suitability. This will be a matter of discussion and agreement between the Council and the Landowner / Developer, but should contribute to satisfying the needs identified in the Housing Needs Survey.
- 9.2 The delivery of affordable housing will take priority over any other obligations that are requested. In cases where viability issues are raised over the total cost of overall Developer contributions, affordable housing provision will take precedence over other items.
- 9.3 The following flow chart indicates how the Council establishes the appropriate level of affordable housing for individual development proposals.

Levels of Affordable Housing



Location of Affordable Units

9.4 On-Site Provision

This is the preferred option of the Council in accordance with government policy and on-site provision will be sought in the first instance in all cases.

The Council is mindful of the advice given in PPS3 (paragraph 28), which supports the presumption that affordable housing should be provided at the application site.

Alternative Provision

9.5 Off-site

Off-site provision will only be considered where there are sound planning reasons why on-site provision is not possible or appropriate. The Council will also wish to be assured that off-site provision is deliverable.

9.6 Financial Contributions in Lieu (Commuted Sums)

The provision of contributions in lieu of on or off-site provision is the Council's least preferred option, and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. The Council will need to be satisfied that this approach will result in the provision of affordable housing.

The Council's policy on commuted sums is included in Appendix 5 'The Council's Policy on Financial Contributions in Lieu of On-Site Provision of Affordable Housing'.

Tenure Preference

9.7 On any site where affordable housing is provided the approximate tenure split should reflect the findings of the latest HNS or SHMA in terms of most appropriate tenure, mix, type and size of new affordable homes. Any assessment of housing need in relation to a site will also include:

- Current information held on the housing register.
- Information from Parish surveys or appraisals.
- Recent availability of affordable housing opportunities throughout the District.
- Number of right-to-buy sales, which have taken place in the District.
- Number and type of affordable housing properties throughout the District.
- Information from the Office of National Statistics.
- Current priorities set out in the Housing Strategy Statement.
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment

9.8 If planning or other circumstances affect the Developers' ability to provide exactly what is requested, an alternative mix of dwellings will be considered, as long as this meets identified needs. This approach accords with the latest Government guidance set out in PPS3 which states that separate targets should be set for social rented and intermediate housing. The current tenure preference is indicated in Appendix 12 'Quick Reference Data'.

9.9 The Council's preferred tenure split takes into account housing needs data and the need to deliver viable, sustainable and balanced communities across the District.

Legal Agreements to Secure Planning Obligations

9.10 Government guidance advises that both Conditions and planning obligations will be used to ensure that the affordable housing built is occupied only by people that fall within the identified categories of need for affordable housing. Conditions and / or planning obligations, S106 and nomination agreements should be flexible to enable and encourage the scheme to proceed.

Circular 5/2005 - Planning Obligations

9.11 Where planning obligations are used they should be consistent with Circular 5/2005. This makes it clear that the affordable housing elements of residential or mixed use developments required by local policies on mixed communities and provided through planning obligations should be provided in kind and on-site (see <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index>). The officers will expect the Heads of Terms of S106 Agreements to be agreed by the time a planning application is taken to Committee. This will ensure the delivery, occupancy and future management of the affordable housing.

Site Suitability: Abnormal Costs and Competing Uses

9.12 Abnormal costs are those that could not have been reasonably anticipated in advance. Where policy indicates that affordable housing should be included, its provision should be a fundamental part of any site feasibility study. In itself, the provision of affordable housing does not therefore represent an abnormal cost.

9.13 Within a site feasibility study, it is recognised that there are likely to be differentials between the development costs of (and the income from) an open market house when compared to the costs of providing (and any income from) an affordable home. Any differential in costs will **not** be treated as an abnormal cost.

9.14 The Council will consider any legitimate abnormal costs associated with development proposals when assessing the proportion of affordable housing sought, but this does **not** include the impact of standard development costs such as demolition, contamination, landscaping, or archaeological and ecological surveys.

9.15 Should a Developer wish to highlight legitimate abnormal cost issues as reasoning for reducing the proportion of affordable housing, or for its exclusion altogether, those proposals must be substantiated by comparative scheme feasibility studies that demonstrate viability with:

1. the exclusion of affordable housing and
2. the inclusion of affordable housing.

None of the cost feasibility studies should presume the availability of public subsidy.

9.16 This guidance highlights the different ways in which affordable housing can be provided. A simple comparable scheme feasibility study that considers only one particular form of affordable housing will not be considered. Comparative scheme feasibility studies must consider all possible options and all possible types, sizes, costs, and tenures of affordable housing. All evidence must be provided in a form that can be assessed independently.

9.17 Other than abnormal costs, there may also be instances where affordable housing provision render a site's redevelopment for residential purposes less viable than a competing alternative use. Where a Developer wishes the Council to consider such a situation, financial evidence, to be treated confidentially by the Authority, will be required to support the claim. The Council will appoint an independent valuation surveyor when viability issues are raised. A typical brief to a Valuer is included in Appendix 6 'Council Brief to Independent Valuer to Agree Viability Issues'.

Site Suitability: Other Considerations

9.18 In assessing site suitability, the Council will take into account all relevant planning considerations. In addition to the economics of provision and abnormal costs, the Council will also take account the following:

- the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport;
- whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in development of the site;
- the need to achieve a successful development. Care is needed in designing and integrating affordable housing on the site and in its implementation and subsequent management.

Integration of Affordable Housing Units

9.19 Affordable units should be distributed throughout developments and integrated with open market units to promote social mix and inclusion at street level, rather than being segregated in discrete areas.

9.20 The Council considers the provision of affordable units in small clusters of up to eight houses (or 12 flats) to be appropriate, although this will be determined on a site-specific basis.

9.21 The external design of such units should also be compatible with open market dwellings, in terms of elevation detail and materials, to allow them to be integrated visually within developments (commonly know as "tenure blind").

9.22 Affordable housing proposals should comply with all relevant Local Plan policies and standards including Policies BE1, BE2 and HN8 and the Council's Residential Design Guide.

Sheltered Housing / Retirement Communities

- 9.23** The Council acknowledges that innovative models of housing for older people have emerged including ‘retirement villages’. Key features include high levels of care available, 24 hour on site staffing and extensive facilities.
- 9.24** Good practice is contained in a Joseph Rowntree Foundation research project entitled ‘A Guide to Planning for Continuing Care Retirement Communities 2006’ and RTPI Good Practice Note 8 (see 12 ‘Bibliography’). Such housing can directly or indirectly contribute to meeting affordable and special housing needs. The Council will therefore seek an affordable housing contribution. The economics of provision of the whole scheme, the availability of public subsidies and other site specific factors will be material to how much housing can be reserved for those with lower incomes or for which nominations can be offered to the housing authority.

Encouraging Higher Densities

- 9.25** The Council encourages best use is made of sites that become available for development within settlement boundaries. This may include building at higher densities that enable Developers to provide affordable housing more easily (see paragraph 5.12.1 of the Local Plan).

Re-using Empty Property

- 9.26** The Council encourages the re-use of vacant property particularly for affordable housing purposes. There is considerable potential to make better use of the upper floors of rental and commercial premises in the District’s town centres (see paragraphs 5.12.5 and 5.12.6 of Local Plan).

Parking Provision

- 9.27** The Council generally seeks an average maximum figure of 1.5 spaces per dwelling within residential development schemes in accordance with PPS3/PPG13. A higher figure of 2 spaces per dwelling may be allowed in exceptional circumstances (see section 9.14 of Local Plan).
- 9.28** The Council will determine appropriate provision on a site-by-site and flexible basis, depending on the site’s accessibility to public transport, and its location in relation to facilities and services taking into account the views of the Highway Authority. The Council will also consider the advice of the affordable housing provider and their experience locally in determining suitable provision, and any improvements to transport that the proposed development overall will deliver.
- 9.29** The Council will also seek to negotiate suitable provision for motorcyclists and cyclists for dwelling houses and flats. The standard is one space per unit, and these should be both covered and secure.

Timing of Affordable Housing Provision within Development Schemes

9.30 As the Council wishes to encourage the integration of affordable units with open market properties, it is envisaged that delivery of the affordable units will be phased as the total development is completed. Such an approach assists social integration and the establishment of mixed communities at an early stage.

Social Housing Provision - Use of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

9.31 The Council considers the involvement of RSLs and the Housing Corporation's non-RSL Developer partners, to be the preferred practicable suppliers of social housing, due to the security offered to tenants in the long term, and the affordable rents.

9.32 RSLs develop a range of different forms of affordable housing both for rent and forms of home ownership, both with and without public subsidy. Where subsidy is applied, RSLs are obliged to meet Housing Corporation Design and Quality Standards in terms of construction. Applicants should therefore consider this issue at an early stage in any development scheme where RSLs are to be involved in provision.

9.33 The Council works with a range of RSLs in partnership with neighbouring Local Authorities. These arrangements include an agreed mechanism to deliver nominations for those people who are in affordable housing need. Where a Developer proposes to meet obligations to provide affordable housing in partnership with an RSL, they are advised to contact the Housing Strategy Manager at an early stage to discuss the most appropriate arrangements.

9.34 A list of preferred RSL partners is included in Appendix 11 'Registered Social Landlords'.

Use of Other Affordable Housing Providers

9.35 Affordable Housing, as defined in PPS3: Housing, can include homes owned and managed by private sector bodies and provided without Government grant. However, good management and ownership will need to be ensured and should the delivery of affordable housing via a non-traditional provider be under consideration, early discussions with the Housing Strategy Manager are encouraged so that affordability can be ensured and long-term management arrangements secured.

Public Subsidy

9.36 Public Subsidy (be it social housing grant or other public subsidy) to provide affordable housing is limited, and cannot be expected or assumed in any proposals for the provision of affordable housing. The Housing Corporation has adopted this position in recognition of the fact that indiscriminate use of public subsidy merely serves to inflate the cost of land (see paragraphs 31-35 of the National Affordable Housing Programme 2006-08 Prospectus).

Developers and Landowners should calculate the cost of contributions to affordable housing on the basis that public subsidy will not be available.

9.37 The policy of delivering affordable housing without public subsidy is supported by the First Secretary of State in a landmark appeal decision dated 22 July 2004 following a Call-in Inquiry (Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council). Where a social housing grant is secured, it would be limited to the amount that would be necessary to convert the scheme from financially non-viable to financially viable. Social housing grant will always be dependent on certain standards being achieved (for example Housing Corporation Design and Quality, and Code For Sustainable Homes standards).

9.38 Failure to provide any information to justify any viability issues or alternatively to provide the required amount and type of affordable housing at an affordable cost, could justify the refusal of planning permission.

10 Rural Exceptions

10.1 The Council intends as far as possible to plan for meeting affordable housing needs within or adjacent to rural settlements by identifying and prioritising sites for housing development or through windfall sites. However, Policy HN6 recognises that on occasion it may be appropriate to permit the development of affordable homes on sites that would not otherwise be released for housing development, that is 'exception sites'.

10.2 Rural exception schemes will be considered within or adjacent to the settlement boundaries of the villages with a population of 3,000 or less as an exception to Local Plan policies (Appendix 1 'Stroud District Local Plan Adopted Policies').

10.3 Rural exception sites rely on Landowners making available land at an appropriate financial level to ensure that the housing provided is affordable.

10.4 The basis of a starting value for example, on agricultural land is its agricultural land value. Nothing approaching full residential land value can be expected. This would still represent a windfall, as the land would otherwise be subject to planning policies restricting the development of open market housing on it.

10.5 Developments will be small scale and will satisfy the following criteria:

- The development will meet or help to meet a proven and specific local need for affordable housing in the Parish or adjoining rural Parishes, which would not otherwise be met. Local housing needs will need to be demonstrated via an up to date Parish survey.
- The development is within or adjacent to the settlement boundary, well related to existing community services and facilities and sympathetic to the form and character of the village.
- There will be no diminution of environmental quality.
- The site should demonstrate that it is the most suitable available to meet the identified need, and most importantly, there should be no other suitable sites available that better meet the locational and environmental criteria set out above.
- Secure arrangements should be made to ensure that initial and subsequent occupancy of the dwellings is restricted to those having an identified local need for affordable housing through the use of appropriate safeguards, including conditions or Section 106 obligations.

10.6 The Council contributes along with Gloucestershire County Council, the Countryside Agency and the Housing Corporation towards the funding of a Rural Housing Enabler whose role includes:

- Working with rural communities, in particular Parish Councils, to investigate the need for affordable housing, including the carrying out of Parish housing needs surveys within parameters agreed with the housing authority to establish the local needs in detail.
- Seeking out and highlighting potential sites where affordable housing could be delivered.
- Ensuring the support of local people where schemes are considered to be viable.

- 10.7** Early collaboration with the Rural Housing Enabler, the Parish Council and the planning and housing officers is encouraged including preparation of a Parish housing needs survey.
- 10.8** In addition to the assessment of the planning context of any exception site proposal, the Council will give early consideration to the following issues relating to delivery of housing objectives:
- Willingness of the Landowner and an RSL or other Affordable Housing Provider to enter into an appropriate Section 106 Agreement or conditions.
 - Proposed dwelling types and tenure in relation to local priority needs.
 - Evidence of the Landowner's intention to sell the site for a sum that takes into account the 100% affordable housing restriction in perpetuity.
 - Evidence of involvement of an RSL or other appropriate Affordable Housing Provider and consultation with the Parish Council.
 - Evidence of the involvement of the Rural Housing Enabler.
- 10.9** It is anticipated that most rural exceptions developments will be schemes developed by an RSL for rent and/or shared ownership, but not exclusively so. Innovative proposals will also be considered.
- 10.10** The Council encourages communities to identify sites for rural exceptions schemes. Where a Landowner, Private Developer or Parish Council proposes a scheme, the Council would need to be satisfied that the development costs would achieve affordable housing that meets a local housing need and that an appropriate mechanism is in place to ensure future affordability, management and ownership. This may be through the subsequent management of the units by an RSL or other charitable body such as a village trust.
- 10.11** A checklist for Parish and Town Councils on how to assist the provision of affordable housing is included in Appendix 8 'A checklist for Parish and Town Councils: How to Assist in the Provision of Affordable Housing'. In addition, a heads of terms model legal agreement for rural exception sites developed by an RSL is set out in Appendix 9 'Heads of Terms Model Legal Agreement'.

11 Monitoring and Review

11.1 The Council will monitor the supply of affordable units in the District; both in relation to its Local Plan policies and other Council initiatives including its RSL development programme and homes produced through the Council's Empty Homes Strategy. It will also monitor the demand through future housing needs surveys. Other indicators which will be monitored encompass:

- Progress in improving the quality of the housing stock, for example unfitness, energy efficiency.
- Progress in reducing waiting lists, homelessness and those in temporary accommodation.
- House price data indexed against income levels.
- Progress in reducing the number of vacant dwellings.
- Change in the number of social housing dwellings in Stroud.

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The South West Regional Housing Strategy 2005-09;

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Local Transport Plan, Gloucestershire County Council;

RTPI Good Practice Note 8 (2007);

Strategic Housing Market Assessment Practice Guidance 2, CLG (2007).

The Code for Sustainable Homes, CLG (2008).

Appendix 1 Stroud District Local Plan Adopted Policies

Policy HN4

An element of affordable housing will be sought where a demonstrable need for affordable housing exists:

1. In or adjacent to the Stroud Urban Area, and the defined settlements of Cam and Dursley, Hardwicke, Minchinhampton and Wotton-under-Edge, on sites of 0.5 hectare or more or sites capable of development of 15 or more dwellings;
2. On any other site elsewhere in the District, of 0.2 hectare or more or capable of development for four units or more;

unless unusually high costs associated with the development of the site, or the realisation of other planning objectives which take priority, make this not viable.

Policy HN5

The affordable housing provided by the operation of Policy HN4 shall provide for a mix of affordable housing which reflects local housing need, and should be integrated into the development of which it forms a part.

Affordable housing provided by the operation of Policy HN4 is expected to be provided as affordable housing in the longer term, and will be the subject to restriction to ensure this is the case.

Policy HN6

Permission may be granted for affordable housing to meet local needs within or adjacent to the settlement boundaries of the villages with a population of 3,000 or less as an exception to the Local Plan's Housing Policies, provided the following criteria are met:

1. a local need is established, which cannot be met in any other way; and
2. arrangements are made through a Section 106 Legal Agreement or similar, for the benefit of the affordable housing to be retained for future occupiers.

Policy HN8

Within settlements boundaries permission will be granted for residential development or redevelopment, provided all the following criteria are met:

1. the proposed housing is of a scale, layout and design compatible with the part of the settlement in which it would be located, and would not cause harm to the character and appearance of that part of the settlement;
2. the density proposed is at as high a level as is acceptable in townscape and amenity terms;
3. the development includes dwellings of various sizes, both in respect of physical size and type;
4. it would not result in development between the settlement boundary and the existing built form of the settlement where this would appear as an intrusion into the countryside;
5. it would not cause the loss of, or damage to, any open space which is important to the character of the settlement;

6. any natural or built features on the site and worthy of retention have been incorporated into the scheme; and
7. where dwelling-houses are proposed, an appropriate area of private amenity space is provided for the occupiers of each dwelling house. Where other types of residential accommodation are proposed, an appropriate level of amenity space to serve the scheme as a whole is provided.

Appendix 2 Monitoring Housing Needs and Income Needs

Table 2.1 Land Registry median prices (4th quarter 2007)

Land registry median prices (4th quarter 2007)		
Area	Average Price	Comparison with England & Wales
Cheltenham	£238,267	107.2%
Cotswold	£346,402	155.9%
Forest of Dean	£214,914	96.7%
Gloucester	£172,586	77.7%
Stroud	£252,791	113.7%
Tewkesbury	£251,928	113.4%
Gloucestershire	£239,282	107.7%
South West	£234,847	105.7%
England & Wales	£222,256	100.0%

Table 2.2 Local Average Incomes

Date	Annual Pay	% Increase
1999	£16,042	
2001	£16,085	7%
2003	£17,830	8%
2005	£19,222	11%
2006	£20,202	4.3%
2007	£20,717	2.6%

(Source: Median individual annual pay from Annual Survey of Housing and Earnings (ASHE), Department of National Statistics)

Housing Register

Table 2.3 Total households on registers at 1 April

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Applicants	1,417	1,441	1,627	1,931	2,110	2,581

Table 2.4 Average house prices Apr/Jun 2003 - Apr/Jun 2006

Terraced Houses					
District	Apr-Jun 03	Apr-Jun 04	Apr-Jun 05	Apr-Jun 06	% Growth
Gloucestershire	£128,427	£150,045	£150,621	£163,065	27.0
Cheltenham	£158,257	£176,478	£180,242	£198,563	25.5
Cotswold	£176,439	£202,209	£198,477	£230,472	30.6
Forest of Dean	£97,041	£120,856	£129,185	£137,557	41.8
Gloucester	£100,716	£116,351	£122,738	£127,505	26.6
Stroud	£122,554	£143,930	£156,585	£157,136	28.2
Tewkesbury	£123,169	£138,337	£137,093	£148,714	20.7
Flats/Maisonettes					
Gloucestershire	£109,187	£131,464	£136,028	£138,193	26.6
Cheltenham	£129,800	£149,522	£155,991	£157,969	21.7
Cotswold	£167,778	£165,084	£153,765	£174,711	4.1
Forest of Dean	£71,975	£84,938	£75,025	£101,126	40.5
Gloucester	£82,670	£103,267	£118,129	£113,020	36.7
Stroud	£91,288	£105,195	£131,671	£115,907	27.0
Tewkesbury	£70,405	£115,468	£97,456	£107,820	53.1

Table 2.5 Affordable property value based on net income

Net monthly income	Range of housing cost based 40% of net income	Range of house prices
Less than £350	Less than £140	Less than £24,096
£351-£550	£140 to £220	£24,165 to £37,866
£551-£750	£220 to £300	£37,935 to £51,635
£751-£950	£300 to £380	£51,704 to £65,404
£951-£1,250	£380 to £500	£65,473 to £86,059
£1,251-£1,550	£500 to £620	£86,127 to £106,713
£1,551-£2,050	£620 to £820	£106,781 to £141,136
£2,051-£2,550	£820 to £1,020	£141,205 to £175,559
£2,551-£3,050	£1,020 to £1,220	£175,628 to £209,983
More than £3,051	More than £1,220	More than £210,052

Appendix 3 Developers' Guide to the Mechanisms for the Provision of Affordable Housing

Social Housing and the Involvement of a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) - Development Standards

Where social housing for rent and shared-equity ownership is to be provided and / or managed by a Registered Social Landlord, and where its development is supported by grant, the homes must be procured having regard to the Housing Corporation's published Performance Standards, including the recommended Sustainable Development and Design and Quality Standards, current at the time. Enhanced Lifetime Homes Standards are published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Lifetime Homes are accessible, adaptable homes designed to meet the needs of the generations of people who live in them, producing added benefits not only for people with physical disabilities but also for everyone who lives in the dwelling.

The Council is also committed to high environmental standards and expects its RSL partners, and their Developers, to meet Level 3 of the Code for sustainable Homes and introduce higher standards of energy efficiency, such as maximum levels of insulation and other initiatives for example grey water recycling where possible.

RESOURCING A HOUSING ASSOCIATION (Registered Social Landlord) SCHEME

a. Make up of Costs

The costs associated with developing a Registered Social Landlord new build scheme are broadly divided into the following areas:

1. Land acquisition costs (if there are any),
2. Building costs,
3. On-costs, - these vary from scheme to scheme, but include development and technical services fees; legal and valuation fees; stamp duty; interest charges on development period loans; building control and planning permission fees, etc.

b. Resources

Accessibility to affordable and social housing by people who cannot afford open market rents or prices is a paramount consideration. In order to achieve this, a typical Registered Social Landlord new build scheme will be funded by some or all of the following:

- I. Mortgage
- II. Social Housing Grant
- III. RSL Subsidy

IV. Developer Subsidy

I. Mortgages

Registered Social Landlords are able to raise mortgages on the basis of the forecast income from rent, likely to be generated over a 25-year period, or longer.

To ensure affordability, there are Housing Corporation funding policies that effectively control rent levels and rent increases, and therefore the amount of mortgage that can be raised is constrained. Other variables affect the amount that can be raised including:

Prevailing interest rates

Scheme mix

Property value

Restrictions (if any) in Legal agreements (for example section 106 agreements)

As the amount of mortgage that can be raised will vary from scheme to scheme, and is ultimately constrained, there are maximum total scheme costs that have to be considered which are pertinent to all RSLs when negotiating with Developers.

II. Social Housing Grant

Social Housing Grant resources are variable and are set by the Housing Corporation each year depending upon the level of resources it receives from Central Government. Part of this Council's strategic housing role involves prioritising where Housing Corporation resources are allocated, and this can include contributions of public subsidy from our own Capital Programme.

In meeting planning obligations, a Developer will need to provide an element of affordable housing on suitable sites either with or without public subsidy. Through the Developer's partnership with an RSL, the Developer should not expect a contribution in the form of public subsidy, and the amount of any subsidy which is available is dependent on a number of factors, some of which have been referred to within this section.

In common with other Local Authorities, this Council has also adopted policies within its Housing Strategy, which have been developed in consultation with the Government Office, CLG, and the Housing Corporation. Those policies provide that Social Housing Grant will only be made available to the Council's nominated partner(s).

III. Subsidy from Reserves

Registered Social Landlords are encouraged to subsidise schemes using their own resources to maintain low rent levels. These resources are not a condition of grant funding, and Developers should not assume that they would always be available.

IV. Land Subsidy

Landowners and/or their Developer partners should be aware that **a planning obligation to provide affordable and social housing effectively reduces the value of the land upon which the affordable housing is sited**. Land which is likely to be the subject of such planning obligations should be valued accordingly. In order to achieve homes that are affordable and accessible to those people who cannot afford open market rents or prices, development appraisals need to take into account the costs of providing the affordable home(s) or a fully serviced site upon which they can be developed.

Social Housing without Involving an RSL

The Council will consider any proposals that meet the requirements of this Guidance. Public subsidy should not be assumed.

Alternative Options Available to Developers

The Council's primary concern is to provide housing for the significant number of people who have the lowest income levels, and who cannot afford open market rents or prices. Account should be taken of the Household Affordability advice in the latest available Housing Needs Survey. This provides guidance on the different tenures of housing, including affordable housing that different households can afford, having regard to net monthly income. Appendix 2 'Monitoring Housing Needs and Income Needs'

a. Serviced Land or Plots

Serviced plots may be transferred to a Registered Social Landlord nominated by the Council. Transfer is defined as transfer at nil consideration or £1. A Serviced Plot is defined as land that has all services connected up to the frontage of each plot ready to connect with all commuted sum and infrastructure charges for connection and adoption or maintenance paid for by the Developer.

Land may be transferred to a Registered Social Landlord nominated by the Council, together with a financial contribution to cover the infrastructure costs to service individual plots. Services to be provided must include:

- Decontamination where applicable for use for residential purposes
- Water
- Sewerage
- Drainage
- Electricity
- Gas
- Telecommunications
- Cabling
- Shared car parking areas

b. Completed Units

As affordable housing must be integrated with any other tenures of housing proposed on the site, rather than provide free serviced plots, the Developer may prefer to build out the units and transfer the freehold of them to the Registered Social Landlord, or make them available directly to Council nominees. Where public subsidy is involved, the affordable housing must comply with the Housing Corporation's Design and Quality Indicators and Sustainable Development Standards current at the time.

Commuted Sum

In exceptional circumstances, where a Developer can demonstrate that there are sound planning reasons which would justify that affordable housing should not be provided on-site, then an off-site option or a commuted sum may be acceptable. A Developer would need to submit detailed written justification for the Council to consider.

The amount of commuted sum required for off-site provision would be calculated on a site by site basis taking into account the sites constraints and other requirements at the time of application. The contribution will be paid at the time of the implementation of the planning consent and will allow the Council to invest in an equivalent affordable home elsewhere. The Council does this by making funds available to an RSL, and the Council's approach to calculating the necessary commuted sum is explained in detail in Appendix 5 'The Council's Policy on Financial Contributions in Lieu of On-Site Provision of Affordable Housing'.

Return Of Unused Funds

If funds, particularly for off-site provision, are not spent within a reasonable time period or are not identified for a particular scheme within 5 years of implementation of the relevant planning permission, the Council will return a contribution to the Developer, including any accumulated interest.

d. Partial Commuted Sum

Where the calculation of the number of affordable housing units to be provided results in a fraction (e.g. 5.7 x units) the Developer may choose to round-up the equation and, in this example, propose 6 x affordable units, or choose to round-down the equation. If the result is rounded-down, in this example to provide 5 x affordable units, the Developer must meet the precise balance of the obligation by also making a partial commuted sum payment. In this example, the partial commuted sum would represent 0.3 of the cost of one affordable unit.

The approach to calculating a commuted sum is explained in Appendix 5. The same process is used to calculate a partial commuted sum by first establishing the amount payable in relation to a single unit then, using this example, adjust the result to represent 0.3 of that cost.

Appendix 4 Best Practice for Pre-Application Consultation and Planning Applications

Introduction

Paragraph 8.3 of this draft SPD refers.

The purpose of this Appendix is to provide applicants and/or their agents with a concise source of best practice advice on:

- What to do at pre-application stage.
- The range of information that should be submitted as part of or in support of a planning application.

Following this best practice advice will facilitate the expeditious handling of planning applications by the District Council and improve the chance of success.

In order to meet Government development control performance targets, it may be necessary to refuse applications where the advice within this Appendix has not been followed.

Pre-application consultation

Pre-application consultation should be undertaken with the Council, the local community, and any nominated housing association at the earliest opportunity.

Planning application information requirements

The following information should be provided with any planning application, **in addition** to the standard requirements in respect of application forms etc.

- Statement of Community Participation (where applicable in accordance with Statement of Community Involvement).
- Design statement.
- Statement of how the proposed development meets identified needs, with particular reference to the stock profile.
- Information with regard to the following:
 - Total dwellings number, floorspace, & number of bedrooms of each dwelling.
 - Proposed arrangements for the provision of affordable housing including details of pre-application discussions with partner housing associations.
 - Distribution of affordable housing within a site.
- Proposals to secure delivery (for example transfer of land or completed properties) preferably through the involvement of the Council's partner housing associations. This could include either (a) signed conditional purchase contract with one of the Council's partner housing associations, or (b) a draft Planning Obligation (section 106 agreement).

- Statement of conformity with relevant design and accessibility standards.
- Information to demonstrate that the development can be undertaken without the need for Social Housing Grant.

Appendix 5 The Council's Policy on Financial Contributions in Lieu of On-Site Provision of Affordable Housing

Principle

Where it is agreed that off-site provision is appropriate, the Council will accept a financial contribution. This will be used to provide elsewhere what the Developer is not providing on the application site.

Calculation

The financial contribution must be sufficient to cover the cost of making provision elsewhere, and a formulaic approach is used to calculate this amount.

Basis of calculation

The basis of the calculation is by reference to a notional scheme comprising the affordable dwellings that would have been provided on the application site. The notional scheme will reflect an appropriate dwelling mix, type, and tenure that would meet the requirements of this guidance. For each of the dwellings in the notional scheme, an independent Valuer will be instructed to determine its:

- Open Market Value and its
- Affordable Sale Value or Affordable Rented Value (as appropriate)

The Affordable Rented Value is based on the amount that an RSL could pay from their own resources (i.e. without the aid of public subsidy or grant) for the purchase of a social rented property. It is predominantly determined by the total that they are able to borrow that can be repaid from the affordable rents they receive, after allowing for their management and other expenses.

The Affordable Sale Value is based on the income & mortgage required to support a shared-equity purchase. Using median joint incomes and a mortgage multiplier, a maximum level of mortgage is established. This is not sufficient to buy a property at open market value, but the sum does represent the maximum equity share that could be purchased, and a property offered for equity sharing at this level would meet the affordability criteria set out in Local Plan Policies HN4 and HN5. This sum represents the Affordable Sale Value:

Example joint income	£31,000	Mortgage multiplier x 3
= maximum mortgage		£93,000*
= maximum affordable equity share		£93,000
= affordable sale value		£93,000

** Where there is a combination of mortgage and rent, as is usually the case for shared ownership housing, the combined cost of mortgage and rent in this example should not exceed the cost of a mortgage of £93,000.*

Formula

The financial contribution will be sum of the difference between the Open Market Value, and the Affordable Sale Value, or the Affordable Rented Value, as appropriate, for each unit in the notional scheme.

Legal Agreement

The contribution will be secured through the planning process by use of a Section 106 Agreement.

Worked Example

Where an off site contribution in lieu has been agreed on a site that would ordinarily require 20 affordable homes, the notional mix for that site would have comprised:

Table 5.1 National mix where off site contribution in lieu

	Rented	Shared ownership	Total
2 bed houses	5	7	12
3 bed houses	4	3	7
4 bed houses	1	0	1
Total	10	10	20

Table 5.2 Rented Properties

For the 2 bedroom dwellings, Open Market Value (OMV)	£120,000
Affordable rented value, based on the affordable rent	£45,000
The developer contribution is therefore $£120,000 - £45,000 = £75,000$ per rented dwelling and the total contribution for the 2 bedroom rented dwellings is (5 x £75,000)	£375,000
For the 3 bedroom dwellings, the OMV is	£140,000
The affordable rented value, based on the affordable rent is	£50,000
The Developer contribution is therefore $£140,000 - £50,000 = £90,000$ per rented dwelling and the total contribution for the 3 bedroom rented dwellings is (4 x £90,000)	£360,000
For the 4 bedroom dwelling, the OMV is	£160,000
The affordable rented value is	£55,000
Producing a contribution of (€160,000 - €55,000)	£105,000
The total rented contribution is therefore: $£375,000 + £360,000 + £105,000$	£840,000

Table 5.3 Shared Ownership Properties

2 bedroom dwellings, open Market value (OMV)	£120,000
Affordable Sale Value, within Council's affordability criteria current at the time	£85,500
the Developer Contribution is therefore $£120,000 - £85,500 = £35,000$ per dwelling. The total contribution for the 2 bedroom shared ownership dwelling in (7 x £35,000)	£241,500
3 bedroom dwelling with OMV of £140,000, Affordable Sales Value	£85,500
Contribution = $£140,000 - £85,500 = £54,500 \times 3$	£163,500
Total shared ownership contribution is therefore $£241,500 + £163,500$	£405,000
Total off site contribution = $£840,000 + £405,000$	£1,245,000

Any financial contribution paid in this way would be held by the Council for the future provision of affordable housing within the District, and repaid with interest if not used within 5 years of its receipt.

Appendix 6 Council Brief to Independent Valuer to Agree Viability Issues

Suggested draft Brief to an independent Surveyor:

As part of viability considerations, the emphasis is to verify that all possible forms, types, mix and tenures of affordable housing have been properly considered and assessed as part of a comprehensive feasibility study.

Dear XXXXX

Re: Planning application XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

I am enclosing details of the above planning application. We are seeking your scrutiny, confirmation, and recommendations to include:

- Valuation for the finished scheme
- Valuation of any assets on site and the total build cost
- Consideration of all relevant planning obligations
- Proposals to provide affordable housing
- Conclusion on profitability

The applicant is suggesting that there is an adverse impact on overall scheme cost viability and, as a consequence, has asked the Council to reduce the proportion of affordable housing / exclude the provision of affordable housing.

There is a range of different options for the inclusion of affordable housing, and opportunities for including it should form an intrinsic part of the scheme costs for viability purposes. It is acknowledged that some forms of affordable housing may have a significant impact on overall costs, but conversely there are forms of affordable housing where there is a minimal differential between costs and profitability.

Your assessment of viability should be tested, in some detail, against the different forms of affordable housing that might satisfy the Council's policies. Comment should be made on the assumptions that have been used, and your recommendations made in relation to each.

I am enclosing guidance about the different forms of affordable housing that the Council will consider. This information is also available on the Council's website at <http://www.stroud.gov.uk> and can be found quickly by typing "Affordable Housing" into the search box.

The FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) entitled "What is Meant By Affordable Housing" includes worked examples and is useful and relevant to Landowners, Developers, and their advisors.

Please contact the applicant who will provide you with the necessary information to support their application. The information is needed to support a decision at Development Control Committee on **XXXXX**, and must be kept confidential.

Yours

Appendix 7 A Brief Guide to Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing is

housing for people who cannot afford open market rents or house prices.

Housing is affordable

when the cost of the rent or mortgage represents a reasonable proportion of household income.

Who is eligible for affordable housing?

Council housing and Housing Association homes for rent are allocated to people in the greatest need, and who are registered with the Council or an RSL.

Some forms of 'intermediate' affordable housing for example assisted home ownership, can be accessed directly from the Housing Corporation's appointed ZoneAgent.

The main kinds of affordable housing

Housing Association homes for rent ~ Housing Associations are now known as **Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)** ~

The main form of social housing, including that which is provided with capital subsidy from the Housing Corporation and/or the Council. Government sets the rent levels that can be charged. Tenants are nominated from the Council's housing register or Tenant Transfer List.

Temporary Social Housing (TSH)

Social housing for rent, provided by RSLs specifically to bring private sector property back into use, property awaiting redevelopment, or space that would otherwise remain empty, for example over shops. TSH grant is made available according to length of lease (between 2 and 29 years) and is most viable for in excess of 15-year terms. Occupants are Council nominees from the housing register.

Shared Ownership (shared equity)

Usually a new property normally made available by RSLs at 50% of the Open Market Price and on a 99-year lease. A housing association, Developer, Trust, or the Council holds the freehold, retaining 50% ownership and charging a subsidised rent for that part of the equity. Most shared owners can "staircase upwards" ~ meaning they can increase the level of their ownership ~ and ultimately buy-out the freehold. In rural communities with a population of 3,000 or less, 'Staircasing' can be restricted to a maximum 80% ownership.

Fixed Equity ~ also known as Retained Equity

This is the same as shared ownership except that the initial level of ownership is fixed at a given percentage, usually much higher than 50% and typically 80%, and there is no 'Staircasing' to increased ownership.

Discounted Open Market Sale ~ also known as Resale Covenant Housing

Typically these are new 'starter homes' on new developments and sold at a price below open market value. The cost is expressed as a discount of up to 30%. A legal covenant requires that whenever the property is sold in the future, it must first be offered to people nominated from the Council's housing register. It is always sold at the future value, less the same percentage of discount that was originally given. This kind of affordable housing relies on it being provided at cost (no profit involved) or where there is subsidy available to cover the discount.

HomeBuy

A grant or equity loan covers 25% of the cost of purchasing a property, which can be a new property but is usually an existing one from the open market. HomeBuy is different to Shared Ownership in that the occupant owns 100% of the property, but pays only 75% of the cost.

A HomeBuy purchaser needs a mortgage (together with any savings) to cover 75% of the purchase price. A legal charge on the property protects the 25% subsidy. Whenever the property is re-sold, the occupant must repay 25% of the (then) sale cost and can keep any profit made on 75% of the sale price. The repaid HomeBuy grant can be used again to help another HomeBuyer.

Landowners and Developers may wish to explore this option, in which employers might also wish to participate and/or contribute. There are different types of HomeBuy scheme
These are summarised below:

- **Social HomeBuy** – is for social tenants who would like to acquire an equity stake in their rented home. The sale of minimum share being 25%, and more if the purchaser can afford it, with a rental charge on the capital value of the un-owned share.
- **New Build HomeBuy** – offers a similar mechanism that is applied to new build properties for low cost home ownership. It replaces traditional Shared Ownership.
- **Open market HomeBuy** – provides an equity loan to purchase a home on the open market. A buyer uses savings and a mortgage to buy 75% of their home and an interest free equity loan covers up to 25% for the balance.

Further information on HomeBuy: <http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/server/show/nav.549>

Keyworker Housing

Currently, Government classifies Keyworkers as public sector workers (for example Police, Fire, Hospital, Ambulance). Keyworkers usually access housing using HomeBuy (above).

Housing Association (RSL) supported housing for people with special needs

This can be specially adapted existing accommodation, but is normally newly built housing designed to meet the particular needs of less able people. Applicants on the Housing Register or Tenant Transfer List are given priority by the Council's Special Needs Allocations Group. The capital cost of

adaptations or of a specially designed new home requires public subsidy. Some people with special needs also require care provided by Social Services, or other support funded by the County Council's Supporting People Team.

Private Sector Homes for Rent

Private landlords provide affordable housing when the rent charged is within Housing Benefit Local Reference Rent ⁽⁴⁾ levels and/or when the Council provides subsidy to help landlords to bring empty property back into use, to improve existing accommodation, or to convert commercial space (above shops). Regeneration Grant is reserved for property that has been empty for more than 12 months or commercial space that is no longer needed. In exchange for subsidy, the accommodation is let to people nominated from the Council's Housing Register.

Charitable Trust homes (including Alms housing)

Trusts provide rented housing by using funds that have normally been donated by wealthy or benevolent people through their legacies. It is considered to be a form of social housing. Many Almshouse Trusts have outdated qualification criteria, for example "for the benefit of the poor", or "people in reduced circumstances". The Council is not involved in the allocations process. Trustees decide who is in need of its housing. It is usually available for life, and few vacancies occur.

Mutual Ownership – Community Land Trust (CLT)

Based on a Community Land Trust model, Mutual Ownership involves buying a stake in an affordable home, but not in the land upon which it is built. The CLT retains the freehold of the land and holds it in trust as a charitable or public asset. Mutual Home Owners purchase a long lease and the cost of their share is calculated using an income-linked formula. Future sales ignore the land value, generate equity for leaseholders, and help sustain the Trust. CLTs generally require donated land and initial pump-prime capital.

Right to Buy (RTB) – Right To Acquire (RTA)

Council tenants of 2 years or more can exercise their RTB, and RSL (housing association) tenants their RTA. When a tenant purchases their existing home, there is a RTB discount of up to £30,000 (or in the case of a RTA a discount of up to £16,000). The discounted purchase makes these homes affordable. Future re-sales are at full open market value by which time the properties are no longer considered to be "affordable housing".

Mechanisms for providing affordable housing

- **Affordable homes through Planning Gain**

Where Developers propose new homes, the Council's Affordable Housing policies include an obligation to provide a proportion of affordable homes. These should be provided without the need for public subsidy, and on the same site. Sometimes, the Council will agree that the

4 The Local Reference Rent is established by the Rent Officer (not the Council) & reflects the average cost of a range of rents for local properties with the same number of rooms.

affordable housing can be provided on another site in the District, in which case the Developer is required to make a significant payment to the Council which it can use as subsidy to provide the required housing elsewhere.

- **Affordable Homes through the Rural Exceptions planning policy**

To help sustain local communities, affordable housing can be provided immediately adjacent to a village, and specifically for people local to that Parish. Homes for rent or shared ownership sale are normally provided by RSLs, but other forms of rural exceptions housing are possible. It is constructed on inexpensive (usually agricultural) land that would not ordinarily receive planning permission. In addition to having a specific local connection, applicants must also be on the Council’s housing register or tenant transfer list.

- **Affordable Homes on land specifically allocated for Affordable Housing**

There is a new opportunity in Planning Policy Statement 3 to allocate land solely for development as affordable housing. This goes beyond the previous position whereby settlements with less than 3,000 population already have the opportunity to provide affordable housing through the Council’s Planning Exceptions policy (Policy HN6 in the Local Plan). However, the ability to allocate sites for affordable housing still relates only to rural settlements of under 3,000 population. Implementation would involve developing a new policy in the Local Development Framework for the identification of suitable land and would involve full public consultation.

Providers of affordable housing

In addition to housing associations (Registered Social Landlords) individuals and organisations such as Landowners, Developers, Landlords, and Employers can all become directly involved in providing affordable housing. The Council is very willing to explore new and innovative ways of achieving this, including developments on rural ‘exceptions’ land. This flexibility could, for instance, extend to Landowners and Employers allocating affordable homes to employees and Keyworkers, and be based on time-limited (Leasehold) arrangements, obviating the need to permanently transfer Freehold land.

Affordable housing initiatives - examples of cost comparisons

All examples are based on the following assumptions:

Table 7.1 Shared Ownership Properties

Property size	75 m ²
Land value	£45,000
Construction cost	£75,000
Fees	£15,000
Property value now	£155,000
Property Open Market Value (OMV) value in 10 years (at 5% pa capital growth)	£220,000

Housing for rent – provided with subsidy

- A property worth £135,000 is purchased or constructed by a housing association.
- A grant is used to cover about 45% of the cost of providing the home.
- The grant is used to reduce borrowing, so that the rent can be reduced to an affordable level whilst being sufficient to cover the Association's borrowing costs.

Homebuy - including Keyworker Homebuy

- A purchaser who qualifies for a HomeBuy grant finds a property on the open market with an asking price of £135,000
 - The HomeBuy grant cover 25% (£33,750) of the purchase price
 - A purchaser needs savings and a mortgage for a total of £101,250
- Selling after 10 years, the property is worth £220,000 – an increase of £85,000
 - The property is sold on the open market
 - The original purchaser receives 75% of the sale price (£165,000) to repay the mortgage (£101,250) and the 25% HomeBuy grant (£55,000).
 - The HomeBuyer has made a profit of £63,750
 - The HomeBuy grant, now worth £55,000, is used to help someone else.

Shared Ownership – no public subsidy

- A purchaser identifies a property available on Shared Ownership terms.
- The shared owner buys a 75% share of the open market value (£135,000).
- The shared owners long lease will cost £101,000.
- The freeholder retains the remaining 25% equity
 - A purchaser needs savings and a mortgage for a total of £101,000
- Selling after 10 years, the property is worth £220,000 – an increase of £85,000
 - The original purchaser receives 75% of the sale price (£165,000) to repay the mortgage (£101,000).
 - The shared owner has made a profit of £64,000
 - The freeholder receives 25% (£55,000).

Shared Ownership – provided with subsidy

- A purchaser identifies a property available on Shared Ownership terms
- The shared owner buys a 50% share of the open market value (£135,000).
- The shared owners long lease will cost £67,500.
- Using a grant, the housing association funds the other 50% and charges the shared owner a subsidised rent to cover costs
 - A purchaser needs savings and a mortgage for a total of £67,500
 - The purchaser pays the Association rent of £39 p.w (3% of £67,500)

- After 5 years the Shared Owner wants to increase ownership to 75%
- The property is now worth £172,000. The extra share will cost 25% of this.
 - The shared owner will need to raise £43,000 to buy the extra share
 - The Association's share reduces to 25% (£43,000).
 - The rent payable to the Association is reduced to £25 p.w (3% of £43,000)
- Selling after 10 years, the property is worth £220,000 – an increase of £85,000
 - The original purchaser receives 75% of the sale price (£165,000) to repay the mortgage (£110,000). The Association receives 25% (£55,000).
 - The shared owner has made a profit of £55,000
- The Shared Ownership grant, now worth £55,000, is used to help someone else.

Community Land Trust (CLT) – Mutual Home Ownership

- A CLT acquires land at no cost, and provides a new house on it.
- The CLT retains the freehold of the land and sells the house on a long lease.
- The house is sold at £90,000 - being the cost of providing it, disregarding land
 - The sale price is 66% of the property value
 - A purchaser needs savings and a mortgage for a total of £90,000
 - The CLT's stake in the land is £45,000 which is 33% of property value
- Selling after 10 years, the property is worth £220,000 – an increase of £85,000
 - A new purchaser pays £145,000 which is 66% of the property value
 - The original land value of £45,000 is deducted from the increase
 - The original (first) purchaser keeps 66% of the increase (£56,000)
 - CLT keeps 33% of the increase (£29,000)
 - CLT land value is now £74,000 (i.e. the original £45,000 + £29,000)

Appendix 8 A checklist for Parish and Town Councils: How to Assist in the Provision of Affordable Housing

What is affordable housing?

The different kinds of affordable housing, and the ways in which it can be provided are explained in Appendix 7 'A Brief Guide to Affordable Housing'.

Identify local housing needs

A survey has identified a housing need across the Stroud District. These are broken down to groups of Parishes. This information is also available on the Council's website at <http://www.stroud.gov.uk> and can be found quickly by typing "Housing Needs Survey" into the search box.

A specific local housing needs survey is also required if affordable housing is to be provided through the 'exceptions' planning policy, with particular priority given to local people.

Contact the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE)

The RHE works on behalf of all four rural Councils in Gloucestershire and is based at the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council offices in Gloucester. The RHE will discuss the process with Parish and Town Councils, including how the community can be informed and consulted.

Martin Hutchings martinh@grcc.org.uk

Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
Community House
15 College Green
Gloucester
GL1 2LZ
Tel: 01452 528491
Fax: 01452 528493

Consult local people

Ensure that local people know how to obtain information about affordable housing. Those affordable housing schemes and initiatives that directly concern the Council (e.g. through Planning agreements and public subsidy) normally require interested applicants to be selected from the Council's housing register. It would be advisable to encourage local people to register.

Identify land

Identify potential sites and engage with Landowners to establish whether suitable land can be made available to provide affordable housing.

Turn existing empty property and vacant premises into affordable homes

If you become aware of homes that have been empty for a long time, or opportunities for creating homes by (for example) converting the empty space over shops, please contact the Council's Private Sector Housing Improvements Team.

Tel: 01453 754468 Fax: 01453 754963 e-mail: empty.properties@stroud.gov.uk

Involve local people

Keep the local Ward Member(s) informed, engage local people, and keep them informed of any proposals. Expectations need to be realistic. The provision of affordable housing is very possible, but new projects usually take between 1 and 2 years to get off the ground!

Exploring new initiatives & choosing a development partner

Housing Associations are not the only providers of affordable housing. Individuals and organisations such as Landowners, Developers, Landlords, and Employers can all become directly involved in providing it, and the Council is willing to explore new and innovative ways of achieving this. More detail is provided in Appendix 7 'A Brief Guide to Affordable Housing'.

Housing Associations remain the popular choice, but others can provide affordable housing as long as they have the expertise, a scheme is viable, and it meets the requirements of this guidance.

Consult the Council for advice about possible solutions, and about working with an organisation that can secure the land, obtain planning permission, design the homes, employ a contractor, and build the houses. If the affordable homes are for rent, arrangements must also include how they will be managed and maintained.

What the District Council can do to assist in the provision of Affordable Housing

Informal advice is always available from the Council's Planning Strategy and Housing Strategy Teams. Enquiries are welcomed concerning the location and potential suitability of land, and advice on issues such as affordable housing initiatives, rural exception schemes, feasibility studies, development partners, the approvals processes, funding sources, and planning agreements.

Contact details can be found in Appendix 12 'Quick Reference Data'.

Bringing empty homes back into use as Affordable Housing

For information about Regeneration grants to bring empty homes back into use, the Council's "Fit To Rent" and Rent Deposit schemes, contact the Private Sector Housing Improvements Team:

Tel: 01453 754468 Fax: 01453 754963 email: empty.properties@stroud.gov.uk

Appendix 9 Heads of Terms Model Legal Agreement

Rural Exception Sites

The following issues should be addressed in a legal agreement for Rural Exception Sites:

- What the named Owner and any RSL or other Affordable Housing Provider undertakes to provide to meet Council policies.
- That all of the units will be used in perpetuity for the purposes of providing affordable housing.
- That the Affordable Housing Units will be occupied by persons meeting the eligibility criteria.
- To enter into a nomination agreement with the Council.
- To ensure that the scheme is occupied by people with a strong local connection to the Parish or if units remain unallocated after three months the adjoining parishes and after five months the whole District.
- To construct the Affordable Housing Units to the standard required by the Housing Corporation, if grant funded, and the Council.
- Where any units are to be made available for shared ownership leasing, the occupiers shall not be permitted to staircase above 80% of the value of such units at the date upon which the right to staircase is exercised unless the rural repurchase version of the shared ownership lease is utilised.

Other Sites

The following issues should be addressed in a legal agreement for affordable housing:

- What the named Owner and any RSL or other Affordable Housing Provider undertakes to provide to meet Council policies.
- That all of the units will be used in perpetuity for the purposes of providing affordable housing, or, upon disposal of any affordable housing unit, any receipts are recycled for affordable homes.
- That the Affordable Housing Units will be occupied by persons meeting the eligibility criteria.
- To enter into a nomination agreement with the Council.
- To construct the Affordable Housing Units to the standard required by the Housing Corporation, if grant funded, and the Council.

Appendix 10 Glossary of Terms

Affordable Housing

Definition and range of types contained in Appendix 7 'A Brief Guide to Affordable Housing'.

Housing Corporation

The Housing Corporation is the agency responsible for managing the funding and regulation of the Government's affordable housing programme through RSLs.

Key Workers

Definition and range of types contained in Appendix 7 'A Brief Guide to Affordable Housing'.

Mortgagee in Possession Clause

Where the Council seeks to impose occupancy controls, lenders of private finance often require the RSL or Developer to negotiate for the inclusion of clauses in planning obligations that would enable the lender to dispose of the property on the open market. Disposal can only happen as a last resort, to redress funding risk. Such clauses are known as mortgagee in possession clauses.

Nomination Agreement

Nomination agreements between the Council and an RSL or Developer are used to ensure that affordable housing is allocated to people in need of it. The Council requires a proportion of nomination rights to all affordable housing.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL)

RSL refers to a housing landlord registered with the Housing Corporation. RSLs may be charities that are housing associations, industrial and provident societies and not-for-profit companies. The involvement of an RSL ensures the future occupancy of affordable housing is controlled. Their continuing interest in the property ensures control over subsequent changes of ownership and occupation. This provides safeguards through an obligation to have publicly available policies and procedures for allocating tenancies, which is part of the Housing Corporation's 'Performance Standards' for RSLs, and reinforced by the Tenant's Guarantee. Additionally, should disposal of RSL assets become necessary, it will generally take place under Housing Corporation controls, which are less likely to adversely impact on occupiers of affordable housing.

Section 106 Agreements

An agreement made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, between a Local Planning Authority and Developers specifying, for instance, that a proportion of a development site be reserved for affordable housing. S106 agreements run with the land and apply to successive owners. The delivery of affordable housing will normally be through a S106 agreement as the provisions governing the provision of affordable housing and its future retention are often too complex to be suitable for inclusion within a condition.

Shared Ownership (now HomeBuy)

The term 'Shared Ownership' is now also known as HomeBuy. An occupier shares ownership of a property by purchasing a percentage of the property & paying a mortgage. Normally, they will also pay an affordable rent on the remainder to the other owner, usually an RSL. The occupier can usually buy increased shares, known as 'staircasing' and, in most cases they can increase their share up to full ownership.

Social Housing

Housing of an adequate standard which is provided to rent or on a shared ownership basis at below market cost for households in need and managed by RSLs operating on a basis of accepted and regulated standards of good practice in relation to physical conditions, management, allocation, equal opportunities, and accountability to tenants and other stakeholders.

Social Housing for Rent

Social housing for rent is the type of affordable housing that is in greatest need in the District. It is defined as housing for which both a) rent of the property is significantly lower than the prevailing rents in the District and b) subject to arrangements that will ensure its availability in the longer term.

Social Housing Grant

Social Housing Grant is paid by the Housing Corporation to RSLs for capital investment in affordable housing (SHG).

Special Needs / Supported Housing

This encompasses a wide variety of different types of accommodation usually in the ownership of Local Authorities and RSLs. Such accommodation is provided for people with some special disability or requirement in addition to their need for a home for example people who are physically disabled, people with mental health problems or older people. It includes group homes, hostels, cluster flats, shared housing and ordinary flats. The majority of such accommodation will be to rent to those who are unable to compete in the open market for example sheltered housing.

Stroud Urban Area

This includes the settlements of Stroud, Stonehouse, Thrupp and Brimscombe, North and South Woodchester and Nailsworth.

Appendix 11 Registered Social Landlords

Below is a list of The Council's preferred choice of affordable housing providers. They have been selected on the basis of their local presence.

Gloucestershire Housing Association

2 St Michael's Court, Brunswick Road, Glos, GL1 1JB
Tel: 01452 529255 E-mail: bailey@glosgha.co.uk

Guinness Trust

1-2 Osprey Court, Hawkfield Way, Hawkfield Business Park, Bristol, BS14 0GT
Tel: 0117 9473727 E-mail: westregion@guinness.org.uk

Bromford Housing Group

1 Miller Court, Severn Drive, Tewkesbury Business Park, Tewkesbury Glos, GL20 8DN
Tel: 01902 773618 E-mail: kirsty.powell@bromford.co.uk

Sanctuary Housing Association

5 Bowling Hill Business Park, Quarry Road, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol, BS37 6JL
Tel: 01454 320808 E-mail: mikes@sanctuary-housing.co.uk

Jephson Housing Association Group

450 Woodlands Court, Ash Ridge Road, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 4LB
Tel: 01454 618 822 E-mail: Bristol@jephson.org.uk

Sovereign Housing Association

Old Chapel Buildings, 635a Gloucester Road, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 0BJ
Tel: 0117 935 5773 E-mail: enquiries@sovereign.org.uk

Knightstone Housing Association

Central Branch Office, Knightstone Housing Association, Station Road, Worle, BS22 6AP
Tel: 01934 524300 E-mail: richarde@knightstone.co.uk

Stonham Housing Association

Regional Office - Cheltenham Projects, 20 Grove Street, Cheltenham GL50 3LZ
Tel: 01242 523927

Elim Housing Association

Unit 3-4 Pinkers Court, Briarlands Office Park, Gloucester Road, Rudgeway, BS35 3QH
Tel: 01454 411172 E-mail: a.allender@elimhousing.co.uk

Two Rivers Housing

7 / 3 Vantage Point Business Village, Mitcheldean, Gloucestershire GL17 0DD
Tel: 01594 546164 E-mail: Vicki.Wright@2rh.org.uk

Appendix 12 Quick Reference Data

There are a large number of facts and figures that support various policies referred to in this guidance. As these are liable to change, they have been removed from the main body of the SPD. This appendix therefore acts as a quick reference guide to those facts and figures, and enables the SPD to be kept up-to-date:

Proportion of Affordable Housing Sought

The Local Plan seeks **30%** affordable housing provision.

Site Thresholds for the Provision of Affordable Housing

Urban Areas:

Stroud, Cam & Dursley, Hardwicke, Minchinhampton and Wotton-under-Edge

Affordable homes will be sought on appropriate developments of **0.5 hectares** or more or those capable of **15 dwellings** or more.

Rural Areas and all other sites:

In rural areas (pop. 3,000 or less) and on sites of **0.2 hectares** or more or capable for development of **4 dwellings** or more, the council will seek affordable housing.

The need for Affordable Housing

The latest housing needs data (2006) identifies a shortfall of - **267** affordable homes per annum in the Stroud District.

Tenure Preference

On any site where affordable housing is provided the following approximate tenure split will be sought:

- **50%** for **social rented housing** under assured tenancies.
- **50%** for **intermediate housing** including HomeBuy and discounted market rent.

The Council's preferred tenure split takes into account housing needs data and the need to deliver viable, sustainable and balanced communities across the District.

Integration / Clusters of Affordable Housing Units

Affordable housing proposals should comply with all relevant Local Plan policies and standards including Policies BE1, BE2 and HN8 and the Council's Residential Design Guide.

Affordable housing should not be distinguishable from other housing on a site and therefore be visually integrated ("tenure blind"). This can be achieved by dispersing individual affordable homes, or small groups of them. Small groups or Clusters are acceptable, but these should normally comprise no more than **eight houses** or **12 flats** – and this will be more precisely determined on a site-specific basis.

Contact Details

The District Council encourages pre-application discussions. On all major schemes we will undertake to provide a Housing and Planning Development Team Approach. In the first instance, and for all kinds of scheme, please contact:

Planning

Peter Gilbert
Planning Strategy Manager
Tel: 01453 754305
email: peter.gilbert@stroud.gov.uk

Housing Strategy

Pippa Stroud
Housing Strategy Manager
Tel: 01453 754099
email: pippa.stroud@stroud.gov.uk



Development Services
Stroud District Council
Ebley Mill
Westward Road
Stroud
Gloucestershire
GL5 1UB

01453 766321
www.stroud.gov.uk

ldf@stroud.gov.uk