

# Parish Council Minutes

## ***4th January 2006 - Affordable Housing***

### **Notes of an open update meeting held on 04 January regarding affordable housing.**

The meeting started at 7.40 and all members of the parish council attended together with about 35 parishioners. Martin Hutchings again addressed the meeting.

He explained again the background to the principle of affordable housing. The last CDC development completed during 2005 was at Sapperton which was the last for CDC itself and some developments took 10 years to complete from start to finish.

Some progress had been made since Martin's last address in January 2005. Gloucester Housing Association had been engaged although most of the properties were within rural locations in the CDC area. Quattro Design had also been engaged to draw up some outline plans which were then passed round the meeting. These were the second version as the first had been turned down by the landowner. There had been an increased number of applications during the year so the draft plans now showed 6 units reflecting the type of houses required - 2 x 1, 3 x 2 and 1 x 3 bed roomed. Tenure had not been yet decided but it seemed rent was more likely than purchase/rent. This depended on the value of the property. The scheme, however, would not go anywhere until (1) the landowner was willing (2) planning permission. The council's policy had evolved during the year because of the new local plan which was being reviewed - the report was due during June and therefore the criteria could be changed. The housing would be specifically to meet local needs and would be covered by Section 106. If there were no local needs then the nearest parish needs would be considered.

The planning officer's thoughts on the plans were that the architect had over-compensated for parking spaces - 13 in total - in practice this was probably not far from what would be required. The sewerage treatment plant should be moved. The top left hand corner of the site should possibly be for a childrens' play area. MH suggested the parking spaces should be within the curtilage of each house. The planning officer had also suggested that the entrance area should be pavements or similar so that it would have a "greener" feel. There should also not be any 6ft fencing panels around the development - hedging, dry stone walling etc would be more in keeping but there should be some privacy panels between each house. Suggestions were made that environmental and ecological innovations should also be considered. Martin Podd, one of the original instigators of the whole issue, remarked that as far as he could see the matter was a "done deal" for CDC although the proposed development may be in the wrong location and the fact that the properties may be for rent only was also entirely against the original concept. Some parishioners and council members preferred the site opposite the present council houses or alongside in the garage site. Also the rent/buy situation - the market value of a 2 bed house is about £200K - this would equate on 25/30% buy basis to a rental of £75K per year. This would be more than most people could afford on top of a £50K mortgage.

Alex Ash, a parish councillor, then pointed out that it had taken eight months to get any response from CDC about a meeting with a planning officer regarding the site. He considered CDC negligent in keeping the parish council informed of what was happening and the site meeting was still not forthcoming. MH said that the planning officer in charge was now Rebecca Smith and the clerk was asked to contact her urgently for a site meeting to discuss the refusal of CDC to consider the site opposite the council houses. MH agreed that this was important and agreed to go back to CDC to ask her to

explain why this site was not acceptable. There should also be consideration of the mobile phone mast which was going up close to the site in Gassons Lane. Jeremy Drew then asked specifically for the parish council/CDC to confirm:

- a) is an alternative site available;
- b) what are the views of the planning officer on this site;
- c) for what reason is an alternative site rejected;

The meeting ended with MH agreeing to look into all the matters listed above and contact the architect.