

# Parish Council Minutes

## *19th January 2005 - Affordable Housing Meeting*

### **Notes on Affordable Housing Open Meeting**

**19 January 2005**

Martin Podd opened the session by giving a brief resume of what had been done during the past three years since the GRCC Housing Needs Survey of 2002. Time had been spent looking for available sites within the parish and the parish council had been kept fully informed of progress. One important point to bear in mind was that planning authorities would consider planning permission on land not normally within development areas purely for affordable housing purposes. Such a site was the paddock next to the stables in Gassons Lane. He then introduced Martin Hutchings (MH) from CDC.

MH outlined the council's position. He stated that the housing survey was a useful tool in evaluating whether affordable housing was a requirement for the parish although it was really only a snapshot in time of 2002. The definitions of affordable housing were: housing provided for perpetuity, provided for those not able to buy or rent privately and for first time buyers. CDC have sold all their housing stock to Fosseyway Housing which is privately run. Of the 6 council houses in Brockhampton four are now owned by them and let.

There were two specific planning requirements attached to affordable housing (1) housing for local people within the parish (2) a clearly defined reference to qualification as to eligibility i.e. employment, residence, past residence and close family ties.

The consultation was still at a very early stage and more information was required. Information would be taken from the housing waiting list but this does not necessarily tell the whole story as people have a tendency not to register their interest in a specific parish unless they know that accommodation is available. In addition, the Gloucestershire County-wide housing survey 2005 could give an insight into affordability and movement within the district. Talks would then take place with Glos housing association and an informal discussion with planning officers. It is always policy before progressing matters to speak to the local community. If a scheme were to come about the programme of development would probably be in 2006.

#### **Question time:**

Q. Why was CDC not involved before?

A. MP contacted MH in October 2004 after identifying three possible sites. One particular site had been identified in the mid 1990s but the landowner not interested. MH commented that it was very important that there was a proven need for the development to take place.

Q. How is proven need ratified?

A. CDC are legally obliged to ensure that there is a need and this is done via the Housing Register, CDC planning committee, and Glos. Rural Community Council who may wish to up-date the 2002 housing needs study.

Q. Jeremy Drew commented that this particular site was at the rear of his garden and he would have to bear a considerable loss on the value of his property.

A. MH - the site is in the centre of a conservation area and there are very strict planning regulations which would also apply to any

development. Again consultation would take place with the community about design at planning stage and before a planning application was submitted. Comments from the parish would be taken on board.

Q. Les Agius commented that he saw the need but this particular site was not desirable. Was there any chance of compulsory purchase?

A. MH Yes but very unlikely. The land at Chapel Cottages had been identified as first choice for development by MP but this parcel of land could not be released in the foreseeable future.

MH stated that if land was identified as suitable for affordable housing the approximate value to the landowner would be about £5,000 per plot. The land in Gassons Lane could possibly have 3/4 households.

Q. James Candler asked where would people come from?

A. MH replied that if the housing register did not reflect some degree of need, CDC would not want to go to the expense and effort of progressing the matter. Importantly, there was no intention to provide accommodation for people outside the community.

Q. Martin Podd asked how people would know about the housing register and what do you apply for if nothing available?

A. MH responded that it might be useful to follow up the 2002 survey via Sinead Barker at GRCC. The Clerk would contact. On evidence so far there were 5 people interested.

Jemima Stewart remarked that the site might not be considered appropriate by Highways.

Q. Somebody remarked that Fosseyway Housing was a private company and therefore was an unelected body.

A. MH responded that CDC has representatives on board and it was partly funded by public funds. An example was Elkstone built in 1995 with 5 units. MH offered to provide the Parish Council with details of the development.

MH - if a housing need was identified architects would be required to visit the parish and talk to the community. If the market value of the property was £220,000 to qualify for shared ownership on a 50/50 basis income would have to be £35,000 per annum. Rent would be in the region of £70/£80 per week. If planning permission is granted special conditions would apply i.e. contributions from local government towards education, rates, play areas etc.

It was agreed that the next step forward would be to contact GRCC for assistance and to encourage those interested to put their name on the housing register.

The Chairman then thanked MH for attending and closed the open meeting.