

Longparish affordable housing – meeting 2 Feb 2007

Notes of meeting on 2 Feb 2007 at TVBC office at Beech Hurst Andover

Present

Pat Brooks TVBC, Housing Initiatives Manager, responsible for liaison with Housing Associations

Linda Thompson TVBC, Senior Housing Administration Officer, responsible for TVHomes which runs the list for the 13 Housing Associations with properties in Test Valley.

Jeremy Barber and Tony Holmes

1. These notes were typed by Jeremy Barber on 5 February from notes taken at the meeting. They record the main points from a meeting lasting 1¾ hours. They are not in chronological order.
2. Jeremy thanked Pat and Linda for making time to see him and Tony. The Open Forum about affordable housing for Longparish is provisionally scheduled for Sat 17 March. Establishing the facts in advance will help inform the discussions on the day. Pat regretted that it would not be possible for someone from her department to attend as an expert that day.
3. As a Longparish resident with some expertise in surveys, Tony was irritated by the Housing Needs Survey, which he considered was neither clear nor evidential, and which did not distinguish preference from need. He felt that the Housing Group had not given adequate consideration to alternatives other than new build and wanted to find out whether such need as there was could be addressed by management of the existing stock.
4. Discussion turned to the questions Jeremy had supplied in advance. Pat and Linda were not able to talk about individual cases but were happy to discuss principles.

Criteria used to assess eligibility for current housing in North Acre

5. TVHomes deal with the waiting list and nominate tenants to Testway Housing which owns and maintains the rented homes on North Acre. A list of available homes is published weekly at TVBC offices and on the Internet. People on the waiting list have a short period to bid and TVHomes then nominates a tenant from those who bid. T
6. TVHomes give priority to applicants with a strong connection with Longparish. They will only look wider if they cannot match an applicant with a strong Longparish connection to the vacancy.
7. There is no requirement that applicants must be homeless or otherwise in pressing need. TVHomes are legally obliged to keep what is known as an 'open waiting list' and anyone can apply to be on the list, whatever their current housing circumstances. So, for example, a household with a strong Longparish connection needing a two bed house and living in such a house in

Andover could apply to be on the waiting list and bid for a two bed Longparish home.

8. People who apply to be on the waiting list give details of their village connection in section 7 of the application form. The criteria are based on living or having lived in the village, having a close relative in the village and working in the village. All Hampshire authorities use similar criteria. They are derived from [national policy, PPS03](#) and for TVBC expressed in policy ESN05.
9. Some properties in North Acre are suitable for people (primarily elderly) who need ground floor accommodation. Such properties are allocated to people with such needs. If no-one with such needs with a strong Longparish connection bids then other (non Longparish) households with such needs will be considered rather than allocating the property to a household with different needs but with a strong Longparish connection. So a non-Longparish household with ground floor need would get priority over a Longparish single person household without such need.
10. If elderly people have not made a bid within 3 months of joining the waiting list TVHomes will offer to assist them with bidding by bidding on their behalf.
11. To sum up. In considering bids TVHomes first consider households with a strong Longparish connection. If there is one then they are nominated. If there is more than one the one which has been on the waiting list longest is nominated. If there is none then TVHomes do not normally drill down into the Longparish waiting list for a household where the need does not match the home; they will nominate a non-Longparish household which matches the need, starting with people from adjoining parishes.
12. The Housing Associations had the right, in certain limited circumstances, to refuse a tenant but this was exceptional and very rare in villages.

Turnover and waiting list at North Acre

13. There 43 affordable homes for rent on North Acre. Details were available at the exhibition (6 one-bed, 24 two-bed, 13 3 or more bed). **Action points**
 - Linda will advise the number which are suitable only for people with a need for ground floor accommodation (done 070212 see appendix A below)
 - Pat will advise whether the proportion in Longparish (43 out of 300 homes) is similar to that in other villages of comparable size (around 700 inhabitants) (done 070223 – see appendix C below)
14. Since September 04 when choice based letting (the bidding system) started, 8 properties in North Acre have changed hands comprising

Three bed houses	2
1 bed bungalows suitable for households with ground floor needs	2
2 bed bungalows suitable for households with ground floor needs	4

None of the individual properties had become vacant more than once so there was no evidence of high churn on particular properties owned by Testway.

15. **Action point** Linda will advise the proportion which have gone to households with a strong village connection (done 020217 – see Appendix B).
16. There is a quarterly newsletter to people on the waiting list encouraging them to bid. There is also a very good grapevine. TVHomes often have enquiries about properties before they are advertised.
17. The weekly list is emailed to parish clerks (Pat later confirmed that this was the case for Longparish) so it would be possible for the Parish Council to draw attention to Longparish vacancies by, for example, a notice in the shop.
18. Details of the 21 households on the Longparish waiting list as at November 2006 had been made available at the exhibition and reported to the December 06 Parish Council meeting. They are on the village website (see annex A of [this document](#)).
19. Often people think there is no point in registering on the housing list because they have heard rumours about long waiting lists. There is always a surge of registrations when a new building project starts. Pat suggested that Parish Councils should urge people with a need to register.

Ensuring new rented homes are always for Longparish people

20. This would be conditioned by a S106 agreement which is part of the planning process. Pat provided a copy of an agreement used at Wellow (copied at the end of this note) and explained that such agreements are tailored to the circumstances of each village.
21. It is not possible to apply such a condition to the existing stock but, in practice (see above) TVHomes give priority to household with a strong Longparish connection in a similar way to that which would apply if there was a S106 agreement.

Different ways of managing the stock to meet need

22. Tony asked whether it would be possible to make bungalows available to households which did not have a need for ground floor accommodation so as to be able to help younger people on the waiting list. TVHomes do not adopt this approach. Issues such as introducing younger families into properties currently occupied by elderly people can upset the elderly neighbours, housing associations having to make the best use of stock.
23. He suggested adding an extra storey to bungalows to help meet the need for larger homes. This would be a matter for Testway but the same issue would arise as above but also issues of planning.
24. The possibility of using space at North Acre (for example the garages) for new homes would also be a matter for Testway.

Survey of housing need

25. Pat advised that the survey conducted by Community Action Hampshire (CAH) was used in villages throughout Hampshire. TVBC were content to accept the Longparish survey as evidence of need. TVBC were not in a position to deal with questions about methodology; that was a matter for CAH.

Conclusion

26. Jeremy and Tony thanked Pat and Linda for their time and the helpful information they had given. Action points are detailed above. Jeremy will draft a note and circulate it for comment and improvement (done – note now agreed by those present).

Jeremy Barber (typed 070205 from notes taken at the meeting)

Appendix A: Testway's current stock in Longparish at 12/2/2007

PROPERTY TYPE	NUMBER OF BEDROOMS	TOTAL
BUNGALOW	1	6
BUNGALOW	2	21
HOUSE	2	0
HOUSE	3	13
GROUND FLOOR FLAT	2	2
FIRST FLOOR FLAT	2	1
	TOTAL	43

Appendix B: LONGPARISH NOMINATIONS THROUGH TVHOMES

PROPERTY TYPE	DATE NOMINATED	VILLAGE CONNECTION
2 BED BUNGALOW	NOV 2004	NONE
2 BED BUNGALOW	FEB 2005	LONGPARISH
2 BED BUNGALOW	FEB 2005	NONE
3 BED HOUSE	MARCH 2005	LONGPARISH
1 BED BUNGALOW	MAY 2005	NONE
2 BED BUNGALOW	DECEMBER 2005	NONE
3 BED HOUSE	MAY 2006	LONGPARISH
1 BED BUNGALOW	JAN 2007	LONGPARISH

Appendix C: TABLE TO ILLUSTRATE THE NUMBER OF EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS IN SIMILAR VILLAGES

A comparison has been made of villages with similar total households, similar numbers of social housing and similar percentage of total households.

Any new developments that are being considered have not been taken into account but where there is a significant number to be demolished this has been taken into account.

Longparish – 309 households, 44 social housing units and 14% of households.

<u>Village</u>	<u>Household*</u>	<u>No of social housing units</u>	<u>% of households</u>
Appleshaw	226	31**	14
Awbridge	280	24	9
Goodworth Clatford	328	29	9
Houghton	187	22	12
Hurstbourne Tarrant	355	64	18
Kings Somborne	654	107	16
Lockerley	331	52	16
Penton Grafton	337	12	4
Stockbridge	326	39	12

* Based on Hampshire County Environment Department's Small Area Population Forecast 2006.

**** Units being demolished not taken into account.**

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- (C) that the Association shall not permit the occupation of any Dwellinghouse otherwise than strictly in accordance with the provisions set out in Clause 3 of this Deed
- (D) That no Dwellinghouse shall be let or sold on a shared ownership basis other than as a single dwelling unit and each Dwellinghouse shall be managed by and in accordance with the objects of the Association and (subject to the provisions of this Deed) in accordance with the TVhomes Register
- (E) That the Association shall dispose of no more than two (2) Dwellinghouses by way of Shared Ownership Leases and will use only the Restricted Equity Shared Ownership Lease
- (F) That the Association shall not dispose absolutely (other than by way of mortgage or charge) of its freehold interest in the Land or any part thereof or any Dwellinghouse except under Restricted Equity Shared Ownership Leases or to another Registered Social Landlord Society or other such body having amongst its objects the provision of social housing for rent

3. THE Association hereby further agrees with the Council as follows:-

- (A) that the Association shall upon completion of the Development and at all times thereafter allocate each Dwellinghouse to a person who
- (i) is a member of a household considered by the Association to be in need of housing accommodation and to be unable to afford such accommodation on the open market (whether by purchase or by renting) within the Parish of Wellow being a Parish within the administrative area of the Council and

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- (ii) a member of the household has a strong local connection (as hereinafter defined) with the said Parish of Wellow
- (B) that if within one (1) month of any Dwellinghouse becoming available for occupation whether on practical completion of the Development or at any time thereafter the Association (having first consulted the Council's Head of Housing for the time being) is unable to fill any such vacancy arising in accordance with the foregoing provision hereof then the Association may with the prior written approval of the said Head of Housing (such approval not to be unreasonably withheld) allocate any such vacant Dwellinghouse to a person who
- (i) is a member of a household which is considered by the Association to be in need of housing accommodation and to be unable to afford such accommodation on the open market (whether by purchase or by renting) within any of the Parishes of Melchet Park and Plaitford, Sherfield English and Awbridge (being Parishes within the administrative area of the Council); and
- (ii) a member of the household has a strong local connection (as hereinafter defined) with any of those parishes
- (C) that if within two (2) months of any Dwellinghouse becoming available for occupation whether on practical completion of the Development or at any time thereafter the Association (having first consulted the Council's Head of Housing for the time being) is unable to fill any such vacancy arising in accordance with the foregoing provisions hereof then the Association may with the prior written approval of the said Head of Housing (such approval

not to be unreasonably withheld) allocate any such vacant Dwellinghouse to any person who is considered by the Association to be in need of housing accommodation and to be unable to afford such accommodation on the open market (whether by purchase or by renting) within the administrative area of the Council and who is ordinarily resident within that area

- (D) If within a total of three (3) months from the time of any Dwellinghouse occupied on a shared ownership basis becoming available for occupation the Association (having first consulted the Council's Head of Housing for the time being) is unable to fill in accordance with the foregoing provisions hereof any such vacancy then the owner thereof shall be entitled to sell the same to any person but such a sale shall only be on the basis that such a person purchases the said Dwellinghouse subject to the terms and conditions of this Deed

4. FOR the purposes of this Deed a person shall be taken to have a strong local connection with any particular Parish if (but only if) he or she has either:-

- (i) been ordinarily resident in the parish or previously lived in the parish and has a strong family connection
- (ii) a demonstrable need to live by virtue of his or her employment in the parish or its immediate surroundings; or
- (iii) a demonstrable need to live within the parish either to support or be supported by a family member

5. FOR the purposes of this Deed a person shall be taken to be a member of another's family only if he or as the case may be she is the spouse mother father sister brother daughter son or grandparent of that other person or if he or as the case may be she

ordinarily resides with that other person as husband or wife without being legally married to that other person

6. **THE COUNCIL** hereby covenants with the Association that it the Council will as soon as reasonably practicable following the date of this Agreement issue the Decision Notice
7. **NO PERSON** shall have any liability for any breach of the planning obligations contained herein after such person shall have parted with his interest in the Land or the relevant part thereof but without prejudice to his liability in respect of any subsisting breach of such obligations occurring prior to parting with such interest
8. **THE PLANNING OBLIGATIONS** contained in this Agreement shall not come into effect until the Association has begun the carrying out of the Development pursuant to the Decision Notice and for the purposes of this provision.
 - (i) Section 56 of the Act shall subject to sub-clause (ii) of this clause determine when development is begun
 - (ii) The term "material operation" in Section 56 of the Act shall not include operations in connection with site clearance demolition archaeological investigation investigation for the purposes of assessing contamination remedial action in respect of any contamination diversion and laying of services and the erection of means of enclosure for the purpose of site security and/or the display of signboards
9. **IN THIS DEED** for the avoidance of doubt the singular shall include the plural the masculine shall include the feminine and vice versa unless the context otherwise requires