



ARHC – PROGRESS SO FAR

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Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Monitoring Progress on the ARHC recommendations CRC Activities

1. Questionnaire Survey of 106 key organisations (41 returned)
2. Assessment of rural content of regional strategies
3. Further research on rural housing needs (including the effects of migration) and sustainable communities



■ Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Structure

- Overall Perceptions
- The problem and meeting the need
- Positive planning
- Better finance
- Supply of sites
- Use of existing stock
- Making it happen



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Overall perceptions on progress:

Good news:

- Raised profile
- Defra website
- PPS3
- Housing Corporation Rural Housing Advisory Group

Bad news:

- Weak Government Response
- Poor regional response
- No explicit Action Plan



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

The problem and meeting the need

Good news:

- RHS allocations remain intact

Bad news:

- Need for clearer rural guidance on HMAs
- No specific targets for rural housing in RSSs
- Local needs evidence ignored in RSSs



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Improved delivery by positive planning

Good news:

- PPS3 warmly welcomed
- Local communities accepting need for distinctive, eco-friendly design

Bad news:

- Little sign that PPS3 is being adopted (esp by regions)
- Sustainability assessed by environmental and servicing criteria rather than social/economic
- Continued difficulties about market delivery eg disincentive from lower thresholds/higher quotas/SPG; need for perpetuity clauses; mis-use of land subsidy etc



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Better finance for rural affordable housing

Good news:

- Pipeline and slippage funding mechanisms

Bad news:

- Rural housing does not get its 'fair share'
- Small rural Housing associations squeezed out

What people want:

- CSR 07 to redress the balance
- Review of housing corporation Funding indices to reflect higher rural costs
- Impose ceiling on plot prices (£5000)?
- Explore potential private funding sources (eg tax breaks; Housing Bonds; PFIs)



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Ensuring a supply of sites

Good news:

- Active support for Community Land Trusts

Bad news:

- Poor progress on release of public land for social benefit
- Reclassification of farm buildings may preclude use for affordable housing

What people want:

- Communities England role for registering and accessing public land
- Explore incentives to private landowners (eg Inheritance and Capital Gains Tax breaks; Leasehold Models)



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Better use of existing stock and retaining supply of affordable housing

Good news:

- Most local authorities apply reduced Council Tax discount to 2nd homes

Bad news:

- They don't all use it to mitigate the effects!
- Limited success of Shared Ownership in rural areas

What people want:

- Ring fence 2nd homes tax
- Maintain RTB restrictions and local connections
- Maximise homes for rent



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Making it happen

Good news:

- Good practice and mentoring programmes
- Rural Housing Enablers in most counties

Bad news:

- RHEs lack long term support
- Weak bridges between top down community and spatial planning and bottom up community-led planning

What people want:

- Strengthen community planning bridges via Parish Plans
- Provide longer term support for RHEs



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Regional Study: Interim Findings

- No single definition of 'rural' or how dealt with
- 2006/08 allocation < 50% ARHC recommendation
- No rural pot `ring fencing` or targets



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Regional Study: Interim Findings

- Rural policies focus on regeneration or conservation
- Rural needs not translated into RSS
- Sustainability linked to urban concentration – for services, employment and prevent ‘flight from the cities’
- No rural proofing
- But recognition of local rural needs for affordable housing (to be delivered via LDFs)



Recommendations in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission Report

Further research

- Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities
- Rural Housing Needs – reports to be published shortly:
 - Effects of rural migration: Professor Tony Champion, University of Newcastle
 - Affordable Rural Housing Needs: sensitivity to house prices and implications for delivery via the market (high in both cases...): Professor Stephen Walker, UWE