

Priority 4

More affordable homes in rural areas

Demographics of the rural population is changing, since the 2001 census the number of people living in Leicestershire rural areas between the age of 25 and 39 has significantly decreased. Noticeably this is the age where new households typically emerge, suggesting a trend of young adults and families moving out of rural areas at this point. Recognising that not all people in these age groups will want to live in a rural community there will be those for whom living in rural areas is a choice and in some cases a necessity. The data for the Leicestershire SHMA suggests that the housing market is failing to provide opportunities for this group.

There is also a more rapidly aging older population, than the county as the whole, at a point in life where housing changes can occur. It is important that we are able to provide suitable and affordable accommodation for this group to remain within their communities.

Rural communities can be fragile to changing demographics, whatever their cause, resulting in the demise of local services and reduced levels of community and family-based support. For many people it is important that they are able to stay close to support networks whether that is to help care for older relatives or to receive help with childcare enabling parents to work.

The LRP has therefore prioritised Rural Affordable Housing to help enable people on low incomes to remain within their home or work communities, and consequently to support balanced and sustainable communities for the future.

Delivery:

Leicestershire has an established and effective Rural Housing Group which includes District Councils, Registered Providers and other rural and housing specialists; this Group will lead on delivery of this priority.

Outcomes:

- A robust county-wide evidence base of rural affordable housing need
- Increased availability of affordable homes where there is a need
- More fuel and water efficient housing in rural areas

Case Study



Carlton

Partners worked together to help finance and develop a new rural affordable housing development in Northfields, Carlton. In 2014, 11 new affordable homes officially opened.

Carlton Parish Council, Shackerstone Parish Council and Midlands Rural Housing all helped to consult with the local community to help evidence and address the long-standing need for housing in this rural area.

County Councillor for Carlton Ivan Ould commented: “The new affordable homes will enable more families and couples to live in Carlton and I hope they will thrive in their new homes. Rural affordable housing is a key priority of the County Council and the Leicestershire Rural Partnership, enabling local people to live in their local community, at a price they can afford.”