



Could your community be missing out on the homes it needs?

Did you know that Durham Community Action is part of the ACRE Defra Rural Housing Enabling Programme and employs a Rural Housing Enabler to work with communities to better understand what's really going on with regards to housing at a local level and to give residents a stronger voice in shaping the future?

Those in communities know just how important it is for people to be able to live locally – near family, friends, work and the places they feel connected to, like your village halls and community organisations.

Across rural County Durham, more and more people are finding that they can't afford to stay in their own communities. Across the country, we're seeing a growing shortage of affordable homes. Rents are high, second homes are on the rise, and many young people are being forced to move away. Older residents wanting to downsize are also finding fewer options available. In the last ten years, we've lost nearly 3,000 affordable homes in the county.

So, what can we do?

Affordable housing is at a shortage but in County Durham the target for new homes has gone up by over 50%; it's vital that these homes meet local needs. That's where the ACRE Defra Rural Housing Enabling Programme can help.

Your village can be part of this.

The programme can help your community:

- Find out what local housing need actually looks like
- Support a Housing Needs Survey if there's interest
- Learn how neighbourhood planning could influence development
- Get connected with the right partners and advice

A great place to start is by requesting a Parish Housing Profile.

This is a simple, easy-to-understand snapshot of housing data for your village – from affordability and house types to age of population and second home levels. It's a brilliant way to start the conversation in your community

To request a Parish Profile or talk more about what support is available, just contact DCA's Rural Housing Enabler, Susan Tron.

Real-life inspiration

We recently spoke to Adrian Hinchcliffe, Chair of Longhoughton Parish Council in Northumberland about how his village recognised the need for more affordable homes and worked with others to make progress.

You can watch the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Y4AqA4OhgY>

Contact Susan Tron, Rural Housing Enabler:

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