

## MICKLETON EVENT MARCH 2025

### Shaping the Future of Affordable Housing in Rural County Durham

A vital community event addressing the pressing issue of affordable rural housing in County Durham was held on **Tuesday, 4th March 2025**, at **Mickleton Village Hall**, near Barnard Castle.

With a significant shortage of affordable homes in rural areas, the event aimed to bring together Parish Councillors, landowners, housing associations, and local residents to explore solutions and influence future developments. The government has set ambitious targets for new housing, including a **53% increase** for County Durham, making now the time for communities to engage and shape the future of housing in their villages.

Speakers at the event included leading experts in rural housing, planning, and policy, offering valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities facing the region. Attendees gained a deeper understanding of housing needs, policy frameworks, and practical tools like Neighbourhood Plans and Housing Needs Surveys, which can support the development of sustainable and well-planned homes.

Key speakers were:

- **Susan Tron MBE**, Rural Housing Enabler, Durham Community Action
- **Stephen Reed**, Planning Manager, Durham County Council
- **Stuart Carter**, Principal Policy Officer, Durham County Council
- **Dr Michael Bullock**, Housing Data Specialist, ARC4

A special video case study highlighted how a Northumberland village has successfully tackled its own housing challenges, providing inspiration and practical ideas for local communities.

### Susan Tron, Rural Housing Enabler at Durham Community Action said

*“Rural communities across County Durham are facing increasing pressures when it comes to affordable housing. This event was an opportunity for local councils, landowners, and residents to come together and explore practical steps to create sustainable housing solutions. We want to ensure our villages remain vibrant and accessible for future generations.”*

