

# Rural Affordable Housing

## Housing is coming – let's shape it together

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# Rural Housing Enabling

National programme - 37 other members.

No recent history of Rural Housing Enabling in our County.

- **Assessing local housing needs**
- **Building key partnerships**
- **Serving as an honest broker**
- **Community engagement**
- **Rural Housing Advisory Group**



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# The Data Suggests

Data suggests we have a housing crisis with a shortage of affordable housing.

- High number of second homes
- High price of rents – struggling renters
- Young people leaving the area.
- Older people unable to downsize.
- Low numbers of rural affordable homes





# What are your communities' housing needs?

- If you don't have the answer, you may need one soon - Government commitment to boost housing is moving ahead.
- NPPF guidelines require 53% increase in County Durham
- How many people in your Parish need affordable housing?  
Can remain hidden.
- Net loss nearly 3,000 affordable units in 10 years.
- The average number of bids on social houses in the county has increased from **4 bids per property in 2017** to **44 bids** per property in 2023-24 - in **Weardale it's 173.**



# Myth Busting

## MYTH 1

**“There’s already plenty of new housing being built in County Durham. We don’t need more.”**

## MYTH 2

**“There’s plenty of private rental housing for people to choose from.”**

## MYTH 3

**“New homes will go to people from outside our area.”**

## MYTH 4

**“Any new homes built will eventually be sold for profit.”**

## MYTH 5

**“Only people claiming benefits will benefit from affordable housing.”**



# Parish Profiles - Mickleton

## Strong Indicators of Affordable Housing Need

- 9.5% social rented tenure
- 88.4% under occupied
- 11.4% of residents are under age 16
- 33.7% are over 65
- 72.5% cannot afford to buy at market prices

## Medium Indicators of Affordable Housing Need

- Second homes account for 17.7% of housing stock
- 35% cannot afford to rent at market prices
- 65% homes are 3+ bedrooms

Mickleton currently has an affordable housing requirement of  
**3 new homes to be built per year.**



## Parish Profile: Mickleton

This is a snapshot of affordable rural housing needs drawn from secondary data.\*  
A more detailed Parish Profile report is available from the Rural Housing Enabler.

£477

**Average lower monthly rent** in this area  
(2019–2023).

The income required to afford it would be **£22,896**.

£448

**Maximum local housing allowance** someone can  
claim for housing in this area for a typical two-bed home.

Holiday homes in  
the area



Social rented  
homes

### Strong indicators of affordable housing need

88%

of houses are  
under occupied

33%

of residents over 65

11%

of residents under  
16 years

### Medium indicators of affordable housing need

65%

3 bed homes

35%

of residents are struggling  
renters of working age

3.8%

unemployed

### New affordable homes needed

**Bowes** has an affordable housing requirement of  
**2 homes** to be **built per year**.



\*Using ARC4 Rural Affordable Housing Needs Model & Rightmove data.  
www.durhamcommunityaction.org.uk | Produced February 2025

# Parish Profiles



# Spotlight on...



## Wimbush, Essex

First development.  
Passivhaus standard.





# Spotlight on...



## **Wimbush, Essex**

Second development.  
Passivhaus standard.



# Spotlight on...

## County Durham

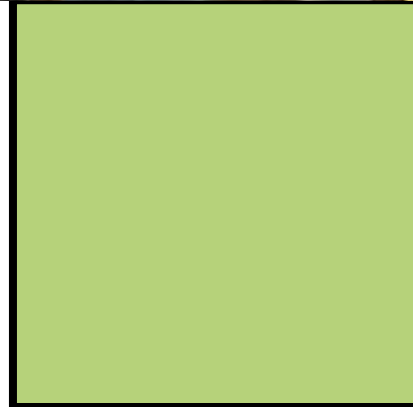


**Freestone View, Low Etherley, County Durham,** is a small development built for Livin, featuring nine affordable three-bedroom family homes available for rent.

Each has energy-saving features such as PV panels, air source heat pumps, and EV charging points.

Construction began Dec. 2022  
Families moved in 2024

*Livin*





## CALL TO ACTION

**What measures should we consider to better support and increase the supply of rural affordable housing?**

# Take Action



**Engage with Durham Community  
Action's Rural Housing Enabler  
Susan Tron MBE**



**Contact Durham Community  
Action to review recent data on  
housing needs in your community.**



**Consider undertaking a Housing  
Needs Survey in your Parish to find  
out the extent of need in your area.**



**Learn more about Neighbourhood  
Plans and how they can guide local  
development.**



# Resources

- DCA Website
- Parish Profile Data – ARC4
- Key documents (Templates)

The National Housing Federation have a [Guide for Parish Councils and their Councillors](#) on Rural Affordable Housing

Contact Susan Tron, County Durham Rural Housing Enabler  
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