



## Leicestershire Rural Housing Group: Partnership Commitments

Supporting more rural affordable housing is one of Leicestershire Rural Partnership's key priorities as outlined in the Leicestershire Rural Framework 2014-2020.

**Priority:** Affordable homes in rural areas

**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

Leicestershire Rural Housing Group (LRHG) leads on this priority for Leicestershire Rural Partnership.

To support delivery of the first two outcomes, the LRHG has jointly funded a **Strategic Housing Enabler Partner** which will:

- Provide a robust evidence base which will identify the need for Rural Affordable Housing across Leicestershire's rural communities through delivery of the 5-year survey plan of parishes agreed with local authority partners.
- Establish a pipeline of deliverable schemes in rural Leicestershire; liaise with the HCA regarding the forward pipeline and possible grant funding.
- Engage widely with the local community (e.g. community groups, residents, businesses, GP surgeries) at all stages of the process, incorporating a range of community engagement and consultation methods.
- Collate information on potential tenant profiles that will help inform the size and design requirements of the development.
- Work with landowners and parish councils to identify potential sites for development, including removing blockages and overcoming delays.
- Provide a named contact for each locality / parish council to liaise with.



- Inform and engage with rural communities, Parish Councillors and members on the need and benefits of providing rural affordable housing, including the delivery of awareness raising workshops.
- Research and promote innovative examples of good practice locally and elsewhere in the UK.
- Be willing to actively engage as a key stakeholder in the development of local policies and strategies and ensure that their actions comply with local policies and strategies.

**Funders of the Strategic Housing Enabler Partner have made the following commitments:**

**Registered Providers** wishing to operate within the partnership have committed to:

- Be a body registered with the Homes and Communities Agency as a social landlord pursuant to the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 and a housing association within the meaning of the Housing Association Act 1985 with continued qualification as a Homes & Communities Agency investment partner, either individually or as part of a Consortium.
- Have an office within Leicestershire or surrounding area or be able to demonstrate that adequate management arrangements have been put in place for the management of the stock in the area.
- Enter into and adhere to a Service Level Agreement with the local authority in which the units are to be delivered and managed.
- To use and adhere to the terms of the Choice Based Lettings Agreement.
- Work effectively with Parish Councils and communities to identify suitable sites and openly participate in community consultation regarding local schemes.
- Work with all local stakeholders to deliver a range of unit types, tenures and sizes as identified by local needs and suitable to the location.
- Work diligently to let or sell homes through any local lettings or shared ownership agreement in place.
- Be willing to actively engage as a key stakeholder in the development of local policies and strategies and ensure that their actions comply with local policies and strategies.
- Be willing to provide a fair and reasonable financial contribution to development work undertaken by the Leicestershire Rural Housing Group to identify local housing need.
- Be accepted by the HCA as an investment partner

Leicestershire **District Councils** have committed to:

- Providing a chair for the Rural Housing Group, linking to the Leicestershire Rural Partnership
- Developing and updating the 5-year work programme for their district / borough, including the use of clustering of settlements where appropriate
- In implementing the above, fulfil their statutory duty to monitor and meet local housing need
- Wherever possible, adopting a common approach to Housing Needs Surveys and community engagement recognising that there will be some local flexibilities
- Collation of 'secondary data' to support local evidence
- Continuing to explore other rural housing options e.g. S106 sites, use of cross subsidy, empty homes
- Promoting affordable rural housing with members and staff
- Make a financial contribution to development work undertaken by the Leicestershire Rural Housing Group to identify local housing need.
- Actively engaging as a key stakeholder in the development of local policies and strategies and ensure that their actions comply with local policies and strategies.

Leicestershire Rural Partnership has committed to:

- Championing Rural Affordable Housing through its work and the Leicestershire Rural Framework
- Promoting affordable rural housing to LCC members and staff
- Securing external funds wherever possible to accelerate delivery of the project pipeline, e.g. influencing the Local Enterprise Partnership
- Contract managing the Leicestershire Strategic Housing Partner and providing support to the Project Steering Group
- Financially contribute to development work undertaken by the Leicestershire Rural Housing Group to identify local housing need
- Be willing to actively engage as a key stakeholder in the development of local policies and strategies and ensure that their actions comply with local policies and strategies.