

## Glossopdale Area Forum, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2006

### Questions and Answers

The following questions have been put forward to try and clarify the situation regarding a development at Woolley Bridge whereby 36 dwellings are to be built with only 15 of them specified as "affordable".

Reference: 01GD 08/03/06 Affordable Housing

Question: *What price £ xxxx is "affordable" housing ?*

Answer: In the Local Plan it states that: "The 2001 housing needs assessment indicates that the vast majority (83%) of identified housing need relates to household groups with an average income in the range £8,674 - £19,442. This represents between 37% and 81% of average High Peak income (£23,737). Consequently affordable housing should be priced so as to be accessible to those within this income range. Employing the principle in the Need Assessment that housing expenditure should not exceed 30% of net income this implies affordable housing should be priced within an indicative range of £43 -£85 per week at 2001 prices. (Gross incomes translated to net incomes x 30%)"

In the case of affordable social housing for rent the levels of rent are set using a nationally prescribed formula. The formula covers rents for both Registered Social Landlords and Council Housing. Although traditionally Housing Association rents have been higher than those charged by councils the aim is to have all rents calculated on a common basis by 2012.

The rent formula takes account of the size of the property, the market value of the property and average incomes across the county for workers in manual occupations.

As new properties are built grants are provided to ensure that the rents can be kept within the formula levels.

Housing Benefit is also available for those on low incomes. This is available to all tenants across the private and social housing sectors. Housing Benefit is means tested and targeted at individual tenants rather than keeping rents at an affordable level. "

Reference: 02GD 08/03/06

Question: *What percentage of new dwellings, within a development, does the Council say has to be "affordable" ?*

Answer: The norm is to require 30% on all developments over 15 units (5 units in rural areas). In areas of housing restraint new housing is not normally allowed, but a specified exception to this rule is for schemes of 90% affordable housing. The scheme referred to in Wooley Bridge is actually two separate permissions - one for 14 units (no affordable housing) - and another for 22 houses approved during the period of restraint (15 affordable houses).

Reference: 03GD 80/03/06

Question: *We are currently allowing the buying of council houses and giving permission for extension. Only to see them shortly afterwards on an open market at an extortionate price. Is it true council tenants are allowed to buy their property and then sell their property and keep the difference between buying and selling prices? If this is right, does this allow people on income support who are renting their properties, to be able to buy their properties at a later date, then selling them at a profit? Should that profit thereby go back into council coffers, to ensure that there is affordable housing for everyone?*

Answer: Secure tenants of council properties have a statutory "Right to Buy" their home. In order to exercise the Right to Buy you must have been a tenant for at least two years.  
Tenants may be in receipt of Income Support and still exercise the Right to Buy provided they can raise the appropriate level of finance for the purchase.  
Properties are sold at a discounted level which varies according to the length of time that they have been a tenant varying. This varies from 32% (after 2 years) - 60% (after 30 years) for a house and 44% - 70% for a flat. In the East Midlands the cash value of the discount is limited to a maximum of £24,000 regardless of the percentage rate that the tenant would otherwise qualify for. If the property is resold within three years there is a requirement to pay back discount - all of the discount in the first year; two thirds in year two and a third in year three. Thereafter the benefit of the discount is kept. The purchase price of the property and any amount of discount repaid is available to the council as a capital receipt. Complex financial rules govern how the council can expend such money. None of the "profit" made through an increase in the value of the property is available to the council. The Right to Buy and the rules surrounding it are set in national legislation and are outside the direct control of the council.

Reference: 04GD 80/03/06

Question: *Is it proposed that any new residential housing will incorporate combined heat and power generation, or any other kind of on-site micro power generation, eg wind or solar power?*

Answer: Yes, increasingly these will be taken into account. Most immediately, changes to building regs, mean that heat & power systems will be taken into account. Regs are aimed at getting much more energy efficient.

Planning increasingly takes energy conservation into account; more info on HPBC website. Looking to build in a much more sustainable way for the future.

Questions from the Floor on the night:

Question: *Last June a complaint was made about rocks falling on A57 at Holden Clough, why has there been no follow-up info?*

Answer: Apologies for the slip up, we will try & get information on the website as soon as possible.

Update provided by Derbyshire County Council:

20 years ago the road was widened and a bare rock face created at Holden Clough. The scheme included construction of a wide concrete channel between the road and escarpment which 'catches' the small rocks that do sometimes fall. This channel is then regularly cleared. The Highways Section is unaware of any problems caused by falling rocks and there is a sign to warn motorists of the possibility.

Question: *The Infrastructure of this area hasn't improved since World War II; when will this be done & not just roads into M/cr?*

Answer: HPBC: Regeneration in Glossopdale circa £4M is just about to take place, including improvement to Glossop roads & parks (£1M alone in parks). This should address some of the problems & there is also significant investment in housing to meet Decent Homes standard.

DCC: DCC has well structured Transport Plan, involving £20M a year, much of which goes on road improvements. The Transport Plan is due for submission for the next 3 years' programme of works.

Question: *Salt bins: Tintwistle Parish Council have to provide the salt themselves; 1<sup>st</sup> time is ok, but then surely DCC or HPBC should top them up? They're to get people to work; parish councils are doing their best to keep roads open, but we shouldn't have to pay all the time?*

Comment: *I don't think I know what a grit bin looks like, as we don't have them in Charlesworth! We've been asking for some years & we still don't have them.*

Answer: You have to ask DCC & HPBC individually. We can't give a definitive answer now. We will have to give a response at a later date.

Feedback from Market Place session:

#### Env Services

- 1) Limited space for bins? Smaller bins will be available, sacks available as well.
- 2) Can we hang on to our compost? Yes. DCC offer compost bins, £6 for 27litres garden waste. Info on the internet, great if people responsible for their own compost.

#### Planning

- 1) Policy of housing restraint in Glossop with a no. of exceptions, eg where there are schemes for affordable housing.
- 2) Provision of sheltered housing – is there enough? A challenge for the future.
- 3) Arrangements for housing for the future? Within next 2 years, we'll be deciding on this, up to year 2026. A big Council exercise, involving local people.

#### HP Community Housing

- 1) Homeless young people & lack of supported housing.
- 2) Energy efficient housing?
- 3) Invitation to attend Hadfield env improvements for housing.

#### Questions

- 1) Can Beesons be made to wash their wheels, as they are covered in mud/dirt when they drive through?

#### Answer:

Has been raised & meeting with Beesons has been arranged to discuss issue. Refuse collection vehicles

should go in & out with clean wheels. Issues has also been raised through Tintwistle PC.