



Ian Cumberworth
Hassocks Parish Council
Parish Centre
Adastra Park
Hassocks
West Sussex
BN6 8QH

Date: 18 May 2023

Our Ref: M23/0718-07

By email: info@hassocks-pc.gov.uk

Dear Ian,

RE: HASSOCKS CIVIL PARISH HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY RESULTS

I write to Hassocks Parish Council to share the findings of the Tetlow King Planning Housing Needs Survey undertaken in Hassocks Civil Parish in Summer 2022. We were commissioned by Phyllis Homes Ltd, a landowner in the area, to identify any local housing needs in the parish.

You may recall that prior to commencement of the survey, Tetlow King Planning approached Hassocks Parish Council via email on 29 July 2022 to ask if the Parish Council would consider a collaborative approach to the housing needs survey, taking a role in supporting and/or assisting in its production. In your email dated Monday 8th August 2022, the response from Hassocks Parish Council was as follows:

"Thank you for the offer set out in your email below, however we would not wish to participate in a housing needs survey.

The parish has seen a significant number of additional developments recently within the parish and no further development requirement was identified as part of the ongoing District Plan review."

This response was recorded by Tetlow King Planning and the housing needs survey proceeded in Summer 2022. Although the Parish Council did not wish to take part in supporting and/or assisting the survey production, it is now felt that it would be beneficial for the Parish Council to understand the findings of the housing needs survey; the Parish Council may find it insightful given its views on local housing needs and delivery set out in the email response above.

On 18th August 2022 a total of 3,918 survey packs were distributed, equal to one per postal address in Hassocks Civil Parish. All addresses were sent a survey pack (not just residential) to obtain if those living in, or working in the parish but not currently living in the parish, were in need of housing in Hassocks Civil Parish. All recipients were invited to respond to the survey regardless of household tenure, type, or size. The survey packs included a covering letter from Tetlow King Planning directing residents to an online questionnaire, and a paper questionnaire for instances where respondents were not able to complete the online questionnaire.

After a three-week consultation period closing on 9th September 2022, a total of 207 surveys had been completed and returned by respondents. Of these 207 surveys, 65 households identified a need for housing. Of these 65 households, 43 (65%) stated that they would like to remain in Hassocks Civil Parish. The key findings of the survey related to those **43 households in housing need in Hassocks Civil Parish** are as follows:

- Collectively, the 43 households gave 19 different reasons as to why their current home is unsuitable. The most common reasons were 'Too small – need to upsize', 'Need to live

independently' and 'First time buyer'. This suggests that it is likely that there is a need for larger homes to suit growing families (note that 'Want a garden or larger garden' was also a common response'), and smaller homes for first time buyers and the ageing population to enable downsizing. Alongside first-time buyers, numerous households 'Want to buy (from renting)' and also 'Need cheaper accommodation'.

- The survey shows that just three of the 43 households would be looking to move to more suitable accommodation imminently. Seven respondents reported looking to move within the next year, with the majority of respondents, 20 (48%) stating they would be looking to relocate later in the future, possibly 1-3 years from now.
- The composition of each new household in need varies in age and size. The most common response was 'Family with children' at 14 (33%) responses.
- The most desired type and size of property are two-bedroom houses receiving 14 responses or 31% of the total count. The second most desired properties were three-bedroom houses and 2-bedroom flats/maisonettes/apartments both at seven (16% each) counts.
- Of the 43 respondents, 14 (34%) households are looking to purchase a market home. However, **25 households, equal to 61% of the group, are looking for an affordable home**, highlighting that there is significant need for affordable homes in Hassocks Civil Parish.
- Of the 43 respondents, all but nine have a pre-existing local connection to Hassocks Civil Parish.
- Of the 43 responses, 27 (63%) stated that the new household would require 'work from home' facilities. In reviewing what facilities would be required, 'Good broadband' was the most common answer receiving 25 (40%) of the 63 responses. This is closely followed by 'Additional room' receiving 21 (33%) of the responses.
- The survey revealed that the respondents have varying financial circumstances in terms of annual income and the level of housing deposit available to them. Notably, a large proportion of respondents have minimal savings up to the value of approximately £10,000; the majority of these (12 counts or 29%) with £1,000 or less. However, the survey also shows that the most common single response (9 counts or 22%) was 'More than £25,000' in savings.

Evidently, the housing needs survey identified significant local housing needs, both market and affordable, in Hassocks Civil Parish. The households identified as in housing need should be regarded as a measure of flow of households in need. As their need is met, others will fall into need due to life events and changing circumstances. Considering this, it would be wrong to suggest that a combination of vacancies in the existing stock and new build housing would meet the current level of need in the Parish in the next 5-years or beyond.

It should be acknowledged that housing needs surveys on a parish basis will always under-estimate need and demand for housing because they are methodologically incapable of assessing need from households not resident in the study area with a local connection to it. Further, non-response to the survey is also an issue, especially during summer holidays and where a housing needs survey, such as this, is commissioned by landowners, developers, or house builders.

Given the results of the housing need survey and the level of housing need identified, it is the intention of our client, Phyllis Homes Ltd, to submit a rural exception site planning application in the parish for residential development on Land at Wellhouse Lane. Pre-application meetings are on-going with Mid-Sussex District Council. It is our client's aim to deliver a scheme that meets some of the housing needs survey identified local need while diversifying the housing stock in the area.

The survey identified at least 25 households looking for an affordable home in Hassocks Civil Parish. More specifically, six of the 25 households reported that they would be most likely to look for a Discount Market Sale home. Discount Market Sale is a low-cost homeownership product where a new build property is purchased at a discounted price, aiming to help low and middle earners who live or work in the authority to get onto the property ladder. A further seven households reported that they would most

likely look to obtain a First Home (a specific Discounted Market Sale product). With the survey identifying at least 13 households in need of a Discount Market Sale affordable home, there is a clear need for the low-cost homeownership product in Hassocks Civil Parish. Home ownership has become increasingly difficult to access; living in Mid Sussex is becoming particularly unaffordable for many in the area, with average house prices sitting at almost 13 times the average income in 2022.

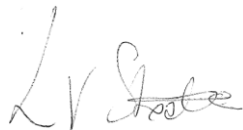
Consideration has been given to this identified local need for Discount Market Housing. In reviewing the affordable housing provision on the Taylor Wimpey site at Land North of Clayton Mills, it is understood that the scheme will not be providing any Discount Market Sale dwellings on site. It is believed the scheme will deliver 75% social rented and 25% Shared Ownership according to the Section 106 Legal Agreement associated with the outline planning permission. While there is no denying that these affordable homes will be a positive contribution to the community and will go some way in meeting the affordable housing needs of a number of households in the area, it does not address the remaining segment of the market in affordable housing need who seek Discount Market Sale homes.

Understanding this, the forthcoming application at Land at Wellhouse Lane will likely propose the delivery of a 100% affordable rural exception scheme comprised of Discount Market Sale properties and First Homes provided in line with national and local planning policy. These affordable homes would be secured in perpetuity. The purpose of the scheme will be to diversify the type of homes available in Hassocks Civil Parish in order to assist in meeting the local housing needs identified by the 2022 housing needs survey. In considering a rural exception scheme of this nature, Paragraph 78 of the National Planning Policy Framework specifies that:

“In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs...”

It is hoped that Hassocks Parish Council will look favourably on the proposed rural exception scheme at Land at Wellhouse Lane given the level and type of affordable housing need identified. Development at Wellhouse Lane has the potential to play a key role in addressing some of the identified local need alongside other development taking place in the area.

Yours sincerely,



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