

Housing Needs Assessment - The Parish of Cropthorne

14th October 2011

South Housing Market Area Report

The Parish of Cropthorne lies within the Evesham Local Housing Market Area (LHMA). The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the South Housing Market Area of the West Midlands Region (Monitoring 2009/10) indicates that there are high levels of housing need within the Evesham LHMA. This need is split between social rented units and 'intermediate' housing that is affordable to the purchaser.

The SHMA report indicates that 'intermediate' affordable housing would need to be provided at a cost (rent + mortgage) that is no more than the cost of purchasing a property at 50% lower quartile of the open market sale value.

The SHMA identifies that there is a need for 1 and 2 bedroom affordable properties in the Evesham LHMA, as well as a need for larger family housing of 3 and 4 bedroom affordable properties.

South Worcestershire Housing Needs Report

The South Worcestershire Housing Needs Report (Monitoring 2009/10) supports this need and level of affordability. Specifically there is an annual need for 158 units of subsidised affordable housing per annum in the Evesham LHMA.

The report indicates that this need is predominantly for 'intermediate' housing that is affordable to the purchaser but also for social rented units.

This evidence details that intermediate affordable housing needs to be made available to the purchaser at a cost of a mortgage of no more than £36,497 (1 bed), £59,517 (2 bed) and £76,921 (3 bed) i.e. that the total costs of mortgage and rent should be similar to purchasing a property on the open market for no more than £76,921.

NB: Since this assessment was undertaken the economic recession has impacted on affordability levels and the requirements by Lenders for mortgages. This would need to be reviewed in the context of the latest available data on local incomes and house prices

Parish Survey

A Parish Housing Needs Survey was carried out in Cropthorne in July 2007. A total of 249 households were surveyed and 97 questionnaires were returned, giving a return rate of approximately 39% of total households in the Parish.

The survey identified 14 households with a need for affordable housing

4 x older households
5 x families
1 x couple
3 x singles
1 x other

Of these, 9 respondents stated that they would be interested in housing association rented accommodation. In terms of shared ownership no respondent could afford a mortgage of more than £80,000.

Home Choice Plus Information (HCP)

Home Choice Plus is a Sub-regional Choice Based Lettings scheme through which affordable housing is advertised including all new affordable housing developments. Access to Home Choice Plus is via a single register for housing. Applicants only have to register for housing once and are then able to bid for vacancies advertised.

Unlike the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Home Choice Plus is not representative of the housing needs of the District. It is considered to be an under estimate of housing need as many households with a housing need do not register for various reasons. However, it does provide an indicator of need.

The following figures are taken from Home Choice Plus on 14th October 2011. Of all those registered on Home Choice Plus, 1802 households have selected the Parish of Cropthorne as an area of preference, of which:-

188 x Couple
732 x Family
59 x Other
172 x Pensioner/DLA
651 x Single

Of these, 1290 would prefer social rent and 512 would prefer part ownership.

There are 5 households with both a preference for and a local connection to Cropthorne, of which:

2 x Couple
2 x Family
1 x Single

2 households would prefer social rent and 3 households would prefer part ownership.

In addition there are a further 15 households with a local connection to the adjacent parishes of Charlton, Netherton, Elmley Castle, Bricklehampton and Fladbury who have expressed a preference for Cropthorne.

Of which:

6 x Family
1 x Pensioner / DLA
1 x Couple
6 x Single
1 x Other

Of these, tenure preferences are:-

9 x Social rent
6 x Part ownership

Summary of Housing Needs

It is acknowledged that there are high levels of housing need within the Evesham LHMA.

The general needs for the Cropthorne area are high with 1802 households registered with Wychavon for housing with a preference for Cropthorne.

The evidence from the Home Choice Plus shows that there are 5 households within Cropthorne itself with a housing need and a local connection. In the adjacent Parishes there are a further 15 households with a housing need and local connection to those Parishes with a preference for Cropthorne.

The Parish Needs Survey 2007 identified 14 households with a need for affordable housing.

From the above information and recognising that the data from Home Choice Plus represents the minimum level of housing need, it is considered that there is a low - medium need for additional affordable housing in Cropthorne.

The evidence indicates that the housing need is mainly in respect of families requiring 2 and 3 bedroom houses, for older households requiring 1 or 2 bedroom bungalows or ground floor flats and for singles and couples requiring 1 and 2 bedroom flats.

The Village Facilities and Rural Transport Survey (March 2010) as contained in the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy, indicates that Cropthorne is scored medium as a sustainable location, commenting that there are "good levels of services and facilities provision (at least 2 key services) and good public transport provision.

There is a need for both socially rented accommodation and 'intermediate' housing in Cropthorne. The mix of property types and tenure in any proposals would be subject to further discussion with Wychavon District Council Officers.