

# Nalc AGM

## Birmingham 2015

# Affordable Rural Housing

## Jake Berriman

- Member of RHAG
- Chair Rural Housing Alliance
- Member of Housing Sounding Board
- CEO Shropshire Housing Group



**RURAL HOUSING ALLIANCE**

# Rural Housing Alliance

- An independent advisory body of rural housing providers who:-
  - Provide a single, clear and collective voice for housing association's lobbying and influencing on rural housing.
  - Enable specialist rural housing associations to compare and learn from each other's work in areas such as design sustainability, and community capacity building.
- A dynamic group of housing providers pledged to:-
  - Work closely with local communities and parish councils.
  - Always give qualifying local people the first priority on every house.
  - Ensure affordable housing always remains affordable.
  - Build quality homes and have sensitive local management

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# Rural Services Network

- A voice for rural services – broadcasting best practice in rural service provision.
- Working in partnership with the Rural Housing Alliance to provide national advocacy for rural homes – promoting the development and good management of affordable rural homes.
- 2014 National Rural Housing Conference marked the beginning of this partnership.
- Acknowledging the severe housing shortage in the UK and special difficulties facing rural areas.



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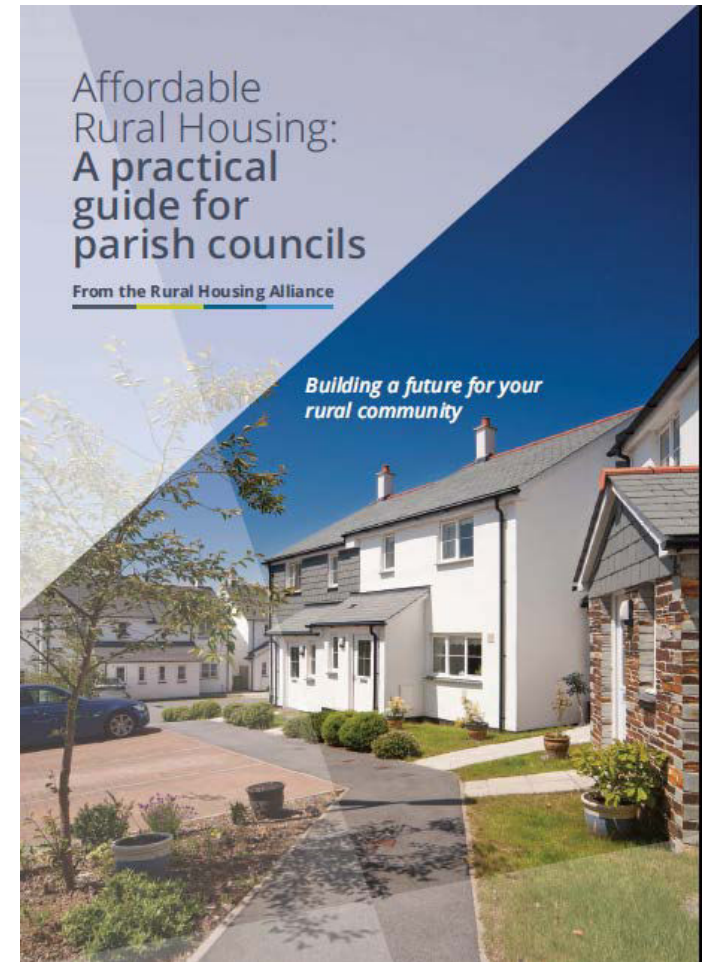
# Building a future for your rural community

- 2014 – Lord Best Policy Review “A Fair Deal for Rural Communities”.
- Back by popular demand the Rural Housing Alliance refreshed and re published its practical guide in 2014.
- A resource to help communities to pursue their own rural housing projects.

*“the absence of sufficient affordable homes in our rural communities is not a new problem, in fact it is a problem that has got worse in recent years”.*

**- HRH the Princess Royal**

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# Well Rehearsed Rural Challenges



- Competition from commuters, retirees and second home owners means average rural house prices are 26% higher than in urban areas.
- Local earnings are consistently lower, £19,700 in rural districts compared with £26,900 in cities.
- There is less housing association and council housing <12% of stock in rural areas compared to 19% in urban areas.
- There is no national target for new rural affordable homes and this year the figure supported by HCA Grant fell to <8% of the AHP – yet 13% of the population lives in settlements of less than 3,000.

◆ Insufficient land    ◆ insufficient incentive    ◆ insufficient funding  
◆ insufficient evidence    ◆ insufficient support

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# New rural housing challenges

- General shift towards home ownership models and away from social/affordable rent.
- Extension of Right to Buy to housing associations.
- Sale of most valuable council homes (Rural?) to pay for RTB replacements.
- Proposed Rural Starter Home Initiative.
- Uncertainty over affordable homes on sites of less than 10.
- Impact on rural land price/expectations.
- Impact on housing association and council rent reductions.
- Impact of under occupation on family homes.



# There is no simple solution, but...



- The most successful affordable rural housing developments are initiated and supported by active and committed town and parish councils.
- You know the concerns on your patch.
- You have an insight into local needs.
- You represent your area and often appreciate how affordable homes – giving people the chance to stay living in the place where they have strong ties – can sustain communities

- ◆ Local Plans      ◆ Parish Plans      ◆ Neighbourhood Plans
- ◆ Local housing needs surveys      ◆ Parish design guides

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# Delivering successful Rural Affordable Housing requires:-

- **Joined up working between:-**



- The local community
- The local authority
- A housing partner
- A willing land owner

- **A shared vision**

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# In Shropshire our vision is Community led housing

## Recent SHG Schemes:

- Lyonshall
- Orleton
- Onibury
- Neenton
- Church Stretton



# Lyonshall



***“Community Led housing enabled Lyonshall to provide affordable housing on terms that the community wanted. At long last we were able to start a housing project targeted at the community which also had the support of the community”  
– Paul Avery, Chair of Lyonshall Parish Council***

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# Neenton



***“The way SSHA has engaged with our community to deliver affordable housing as an integral part of a major community project that has helped make it happen has been crucial in winning over the doubters”  
– John Pickup, Chair, Neenton BenCom.***

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# Church Stretton



***“Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success”. This quote from Henry Ford sums up what the Ashbrook II Project Board is all about. We came together in the beginning as a group of enthusiastic people from all walks of life who wanted to be involved in producing the best affordable housing project for the community of Church Stretton. We have gone out to seek people’s views, deliberated over architects, builders, site layout, design details and building materials. We have agreed, disagreed and compromised but in the end we have a planned development which encapsulated all our input. I now look forward to it being a success” – Hilary ClaytonSmith – Project Board Member and local architectural quality champion***

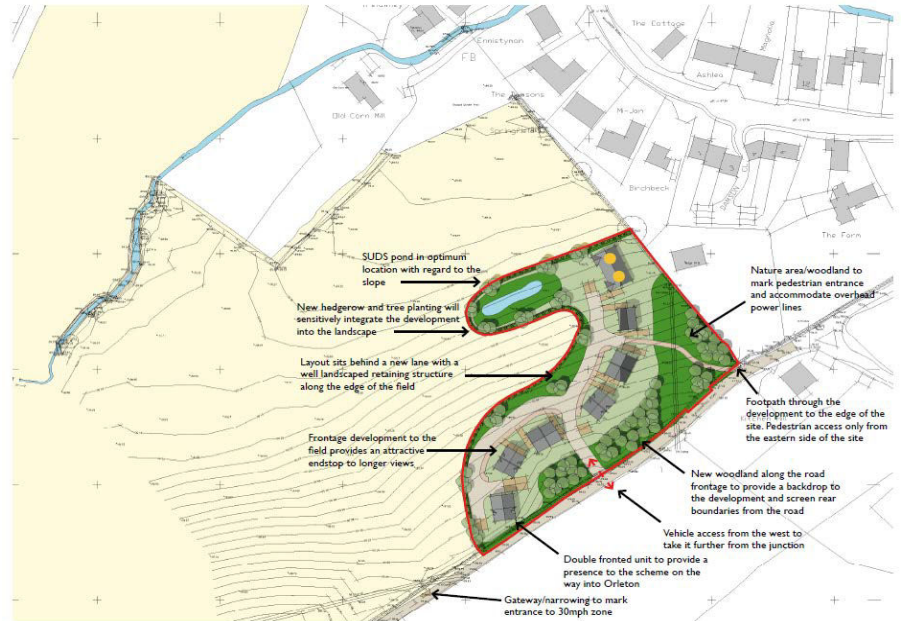
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# Orleton



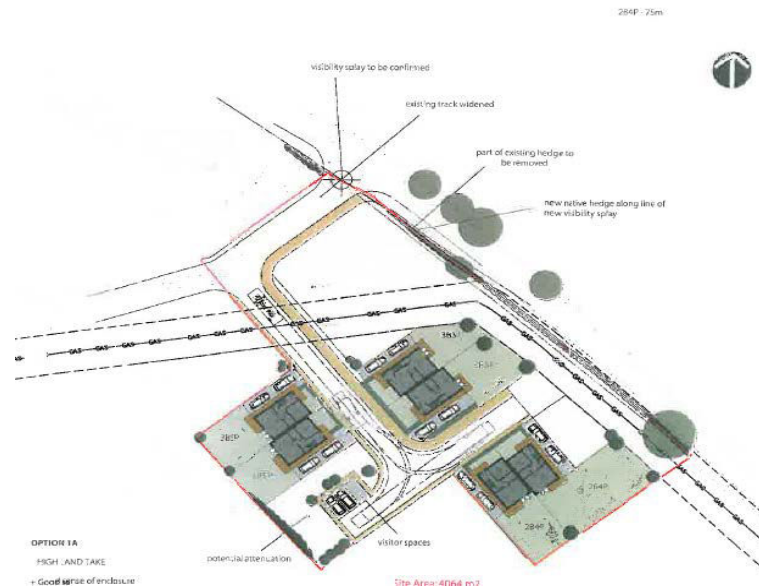
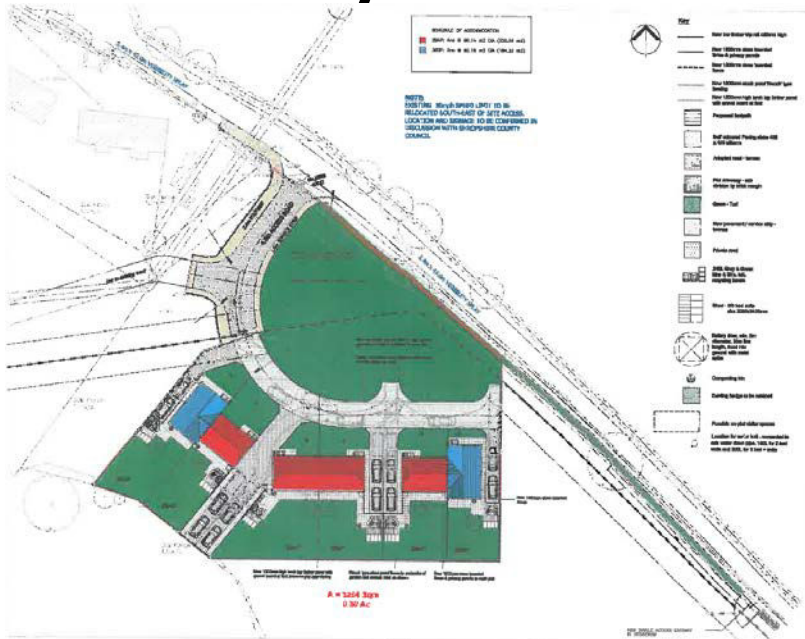
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# Onibury



***“From the first instance, the local community were consulted of the proposed development, this is in the interest of good communications. Our experience is one of an open agenda in public meetings and committees, where all aspects of need, planning and design were discussed, this has been welcomed by all” – Ray Jeavons, Onibury Parish Councillor and Project Board Member***

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# Our learning shared

Why involve a **RURAL HOUSING ALLIANCE** partner?

- We believe joint working delivers:
  - A better scheme
  - Better community engagement
  - Better fit to local needs, acceptance and welcome
  - More sustainable communities
  - Greater validation of Parish Councils delivering locally
- Community led empowers people and communities
- It can be fun and rewarding, honest!

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## The Rural Alliance Pledge

Affordable homes for  
local people

### We will:

- ✓ Work closely with the local community and Parish Council to find the right site
- ✓ Always give qualifying local people in housing need first priority for every home
- ✓ Ensure that affordable homes always remain affordable
- ✓ Build sensitively designed, high quality homes to high environmental standards
- ✓ Provide good quality and locally sensitive management services to our residents
- ✓ Always respond positively to the local community.



# Thanks for listening Questions?

<http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/images/files/ruralhousing-guideforparishcouncils2014.pdf>



 business for neighbourhoods

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