

**SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL
EXAMINATION OF THE SITE ALLOCATIONS & MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT
(SAMDev) PLAN**

RESPONSE TO INSPECTOR – POLICY S7 : CRAVEN ARMS

Shropshire HomePoint : Register of Housing Need / Housing Waiting List

Shropshire Council's Housing Register also known as the Housing Waiting List is managed by Shropshire HomePoint which provides a one-stop shop and solution for people in housing need.

At the end of 2013, the waiting list underwent a comprehensive review of all applicants in an attempt to rationalise and update historic applications. The comprehensive review required all those in need of housing to reapply to ensure that the register included only those households in need and that accurate records were maintained of the needs expressed by those households.

The Housing Waiting List is now live and reactive in so much as individuals/households apply to the Shropshire HomePoint service if they are in housing need. The comprehensive application form and assessment process determines their degree of housing need and helps sign post to other services that will be of assistance to them. The approach to HomePoint is via a number of routes such as a dedicated website, support agencies such as social services, town and Parish council and other referral mechanisms.

There is a standard application form with a comprehensive range of questions that help determine what the applicant's current housing issues and circumstances are, what their housing need is and where they need to live in order to sustain their household.

This continues to grow and become more targeted and effective and is a fundamental evidential component of delivering affordable housing as it identifies the level of local need within the Parish, those in need elsewhere but need to return to the Parish and it identifies the housing type and size of property needed. Throughout 2014, the applications on the Housing Register have risen on a month by month basis and now stands at 6000 households in housing need.

Housing Need Surveys : Shropshire practice and procedure

As stated above, the Shropshire HomePoint register provides us with evidence of the scale of need and property requirements, it is a robust indicator of local households in housing need and their property requirements. Currently in Shropshire the highest demand for affordable housing derives from market towns/key centres (e.g. Craven Arms) as would be expected.

Affordable housing on Exception Sites are proposed specifically for those in housing need with a local connection to the location of the development site. Where the Shropshire HomePoint register indicates need in the local area which is equal to / greater than the size of the proposed development then there is little merit in undertaking a housing need survey as the identified need will be satisfied in whole or in part by the proposed development.

A housing need survey would be undertaken where there is insufficient evidenced need identified through the Shropshire HomePoint register to support an exception site development.

There are many possible reasons for the Shropshire HomePoint register to fail to indicate sufficient need to support a proposed development:

- there may not be housing need in the locality which might occur where householders perceive that the housing register is for those in absolute need;
- households may be living with either family, friends or in substandard private rented accommodation and so, fail to register;
- households might not register because they do not think that there is any chance of obtaining such accommodation given that there is little or no affordable housing currently within their Parish.

The last issue is particularly relevant within deeply rural parishes, however, the issues above rarely affect the provision of housing need data to support exception site developments in market towns and key centres in Shropshire.