

Housing Topic Paper

1. Introduction

Penwith District Council is currently preparing a key document in its Local Development Framework called the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy will set out the long term spatial plan for the district and the strategic policies that will help to deliver the plan. One of the key issues that will be addressed through the Core Strategy is the broad location for housing development over the next 20 years and also the need for increased affordable housing provision to meet local needs.

Penwith is experiencing a continuing growth in the number of new households who require homes within the District. The increase in population has largely been due to inward migration, with Penwith proving a favoured location for those seeking retirement homes or a better quality of life. This trend is unlikely to change and, while migrants include those of working age, the present imbalance in the age structure, between people of working and non-working ages, is perpetuated as the young leave the area to seek training and employment and older age groups continue to find the District attractive.

The attractiveness of the District to inward migrants and those seeking second homes has led to competition in the housing market with resultant prices that are beyond the reach of many of those employed locally on lower incomes. This has highlighted the need to ensure that there is an adequate supply of affordable housing available to meet the requirements of those unable to compete in the local housing market.

Much of the District falls under designations such as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), Area of Great Historic Value (AGHV), etc. These designations have an impact on the amount of land available for housing growth.

Although the proportion of owner occupied households is comparable with the proportion nationally, the standard of housing is significantly lower, 24.9% of all households (6,992 households) did not have central heating and/or sole use of a bathroom, compared to only 8.8% nationally. (2001 census). According to the index of multiple deprivation 2004, 69% of the Penwith population are in the top quartile nationally for a deprived living environment, this indicator includes central heating, social and private housing in poor condition, outdoor air quality and road traffic accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists. Four wards in Penwith (St. Ives South, Penzance East, Penzance Central and Penzance Promenade) are in the top 5% most deprived living environment nationally.

In 2003, 7.36% per 1000 households were accepted as homeless which was higher than the national rate of 6.47% (Mid 2003 estimates from the Office of National Statistics).

In 2003/04, 49.4% of Penwith residents thought that people sleeping rough on the streets was a very or fairly big problem in their local area this was over double the national average of 22.6%.

2. National Policy Guidance

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3) was issued in November 2006 in replacement of previous policy and guidance, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (2000) which has now been cancelled. At the same time the Government also

issued a policy statement entitled **Delivering Affordable Housing**.

PPS3 sets out the national policy framework for delivering the Government's housing objectives and reflects the Government's commitment to improving the affordability and supply of housing in all communities, including rural areas. It states that the delivery of housing in rural areas should reflect the key principles underpinning the PPS, providing high quality housing that contributes to the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities in towns and villages.

PPS3 advises that the Government's key housing policy goal is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. It further advises that to achieve this the Government is seeking:

- To achieve a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community;
- To widen opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing, in particular those who are vulnerable or in need;
- To improve affordability across the housing market, including by increasing the supply of housing;
- To create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both urban and rural.

PPS3 advises that the above housing policy objectives provide the context for planning for housing through development plans and planning decisions. It further advises that the specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver are:

- High quality housing that is well designed and built to a high standard;
- A mix of housing, both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural;
- A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice;
- Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure;
- A flexible, responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously-developed land, where appropriate.

PPS3 sets out a number of national planning policies, including:

- **Achieving high quality housing** – PPS3 advises that good design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, which contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities. It further advises that good design should contribute positively to making places better for people, and that design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the

character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.

- **Achieving a mix of housing** – PPS3 advises that key characteristics of a mixed community are a variety of housing, particularly in terms of tenure and price and a mix of different households such as families with children, single person households and older people.
- **Market housing** – PPS3 advises that one of the Government's key objectives is to provide a variety of high quality market housing. It further advises that this includes addressing any shortfalls in the supply of market housing and encouraging the managed release of housing, where appropriate.
- **Affordable housing** – PPS3 advises that the Government is committed to providing high quality housing for people who are unable to access or afford market housing, for example, vulnerable people and key workers as well as helping people make the step from social-rented housing to home-ownership. It further advises that in Local Development Documents, Local Planning Authorities should:
 - Set an overall target for the amount of affordable housing to be provided;
 - Set separate targets for social-rented and intermediate affordable housing where appropriate;
 - Specify the size and type of affordable housing that, in their judgement, is likely to be needed in particular locations and, where appropriate, on specific sites;
 - Set out the range of circumstances in which affordable housing will be required;
 - Set out the approach to seeking developer contributions to facilitate the provision of affordable housing.

PPS3 advises that in providing for affordable housing in rural communities, where opportunities for delivering affordable housing tend to be more limited, the aim should be to deliver high quality housing that contributes to the creation and maintenance of sustainable rural communities in towns and villages. It further advises that this requires planning adopting a positive and pro-active approach which is informed by evidence, with clear targets for the delivery of rural affordable housing. Where viable and practical, Local Planning Authorities are advised to consider allocating and releasing sites solely for affordable housing, including using a Rural Exceptions Site Policy which enables small sites to be used specifically for affordable housing in small rural communities, that would not normally be used for housing because, for example, they are subject to policies of restraint.

- **Making effective use of existing housing stock** – PPS3 advises that conversions of existing housing can provide an important source of new housing. Local Planning Authorities are required to develop positive policies to identify and bring into residential use empty housing and buildings in line with local housing and empty property strategies.
- **Assessing an appropriate level of housing** – PPS3 advises that the level of housing provision should be determined taking a strategic, evidence-based approach

that takes into account relevant local, sub-regional, regional and national policies and strategies. In determining the local, sub-regional and regional level of housing provision, Local Planning Authorities and Regional Planning Bodies, working together, are required to take into account:

- Evidence of current and future levels of need and demand for housing and affordability levels based upon:
 - Local and sub-regional evidence of need and demand, set out in Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other relevant market information;
 - Advice from the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit on the impact of the proposals for affordability in the region;
 - The Government's latest published household projections and the needs of the regional economy, having regard to economic growth forecasts;
 - Local and sub-regional evidence of the availability of suitable land for housing using Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments and drawing on other relevant sources of information such as the National Land Use Database and the Register of Surplus Public Sector Land;
 - The Government's overall ambitions for affordability across the housing market, including the need to improve affordability and increase housing supply;
 - A Sustainability Appraisal of the environmental, social and economic implications, including costs, benefits and risks of development. This will include considering the most sustainable pattern of housing, including in urban and rural areas;
 - An assessment of the impact of development upon existing or planned infrastructure and of any new infrastructure required.
- **Providing housing in suitable locations**
 - **Identifying suitable locations for housing development** – PPS3 advises that in support of its objective of creating mixed and sustainable communities, the Government's policy is to ensure that housing is developed in suitable locations which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. This, it is explained, should be achieved by making effective use of land, existing infrastructure and available public and private investment, and include consideration of the opportunity for housing provision on surplus public sector land to create mixed use developments. The priority for development should be previously developed land, in particularly vacant and derelict sites and buildings. PPS3 also advises that at the local level, Local Development Documents should set out a strategy for the planned location of new housing which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Local Planning Authorities, working with stakeholders, are required to set out the criteria to be used for identifying broad locations and specific sites taking into account:
 - The spatial vision for the local area (having regard to relevant documents such as the Sustainable Community Strategy) and objectives set out in the relevant

Regional Spatial Strategy;

- Evidence of current and future levels of need and demand for housing as well as the availability of suitable, viable sites for housing development;
 - The contribution to be made to cutting carbon emissions from focusing new development in locations with good public transport accessibility and/or by means other than the private car;
 - Any physical, environmental, land ownership, land-use, investment constraints or risks associated with broad locations or specific sites;
 - Options for accommodating new housing growth, taking into account opportunities for, or constraints on, development;
 - Accessibility of proposed development to existing local community facilities, infrastructure and services, including public transport. The location of housing should facilitate the creation of communities of sufficient size and mix to justify the development of, and sustain, community facilities, infrastructure and services;
 - The need to provide housing in rural areas, not only in market towns and local service centres but also in villages in order to enhance and maintain their sustainability;
 - The need to develop mixed, sustainable communities across the wider authority area as well as at neighbourhood level.
- **Effective use of land** – PPS3 advises that a key objective is that Local Planning Authorities should continue to make effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed. The national target is that at least 60 per cent of new housing should be on previously developed land. It further advises that when identifying previously-developed land for housing development, Local Planning Authorities will, in particular, need to consider sustainability issues as some sites will not necessarily be suitable for housing. In addition, Local Development Documents are required to include a previously-developed land target and trajectory and strategies for bringing previously-developed land into housing use. In developing their previously-developed land strategies, Local Planning Authorities are required to consider a range of incentives or interventions that could help to ensure that previously-developed land is developed. This is required to include:
 - Planning to address obstacles to the development of vacant and derelict sites and buildings, for example, use of compulsory purchase powers where that would help resolve land ownership or assembly issues;
 - Considering whether sites that are currently allocated for industrial or commercial use could be more appropriately re-allocated for housing development;
 - Encouraging innovative housing schemes that make effective use of public sector previously-developed land.

- **Efficient use of land** – PPS3 advises that using land efficiently is a key consideration in planning for housing, and that Local Planning Authorities should develop density policies having regard to:
 - The spatial vision and strategy for housing development in their area, including the level of housing demand and need and the availability of suitable land in the area;
 - The current and future level and a capacity of infrastructure, services and facilities such as public and private amenity space, in particular green and open space;
 - The desirability of using land efficiently and reducing, and adapting to, the impacts of climate change;
 - The current and future levels of accessibility, particularly public transport accessibility;
 - The characteristics of the area, including the current and proposed mix of uses;
 - The desirability of achieving high quality, well designed housing having regard to the design consideration set out in the PPS.

PPS3 advises that reflecting the above, Local Planning Authorities may wish to set out a range of densities across the plan area rather than one broad density range although 30 dwellings per hectare net should be used as a national indicative minimum to guide policy development and decision-making, until local density policies are in place.

- **Delivering a flexible supply of land for housing** – PPS3 advises that the Government's objective is to ensure that the planning system delivers a flexible, responsive supply of land. Local Planning Authorities are required to develop policies and implementation strategies to ensure that sufficient, suitable land is available to achieve their housing and previously-developed land delivery objectives. PPS3 further advises that at the local level, Local Planning Authorities should set out in Local Development Documents their policies and strategies for delivering the level of housing provision, including identifying broad locations and specific sites that will enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption, taking account of the level of housing provision set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy. Drawing on information from the Strategic Land Availability Assessment and or other relevant evidence, Local Planning Authorities are required to identify sufficient specific **deliverable** sites to deliver housing in the first five years. To be considered deliverable, sites should, at the point of adoption of the relevant Local Development Document be:
 - **Available** – the site is available now;
 - **Suitable** – the site offers a suitable location for development now and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities;
 - **Achievable** – there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site with five years.

Local Planning Authorities are also required to identify a further supply of specific, developable sites for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15. Where it is not possible to identify specific sites for years 11-15, broad locations for future growth should be indicated. To be considered **developable**, sites should be in a location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available for, and could be developed at the point envisaged. Once identified, the supply of land should be managed in a way that ensures that a continuous five year supply of **deliverable** sites is maintained.

- **Determining how much land is required** – In determining how much land is required, Local Planning Authorities are required not to include sites for which they have granted planning permission unless they can demonstrate, based upon robust evidence, that the sites are developable and are likely to contribute to housing delivery at the point envisaged. Local Planning Authorities are further advised not to include an allowances for windfalls (that is sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the plan process, including previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available) in the first ten years of land supply unless they can provide robust evidence of genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified. In these circumstances, an allowance should be included but should be realistic having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends.
- **Maintaining a flexible, responsive supply of land** – PPS3 advises that to ensure that there is a continuous five year supply of deliverable sites available for housing, Local Planning Authorities should monitor the supply of deliverable sites on an annual basis, linked to the Annual Monitoring Report.

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (PPS12) states that local authorities must prepare a housing trajectory within their development plan which shows past building rates and the forecast for the future building rates over the development plan period. PPS12 advises that a robust housing trajectory should:-

- Set out the past and anticipated supply of housing over the entire life-span of a development plan document;
- Assess any future shortfall or surplus of housing over the plan period by comparing this to planned build rates;
- Reflect the outcome of discussion with stakeholders, including the development industry;
- Demonstrate how the plan will deliver the policies relating to housing provision.

3. Regional & County Policy Guidance

The draft **Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (RSS)** sets the target for Penwith to deliver 240 dwellings per annum from 2006 - 2026, which equates to 4800 dwellings over 20 years. This is a continuation of the housing target set in the Penwith Local Plan, which sought 240 dwellings per annum up to 2011, of which 70 dwellings per annum were expected to be affordable. The RSS has not stated how many of these dwellings should be

affordable, but has given guidelines that at least 30% should be affordable in all areas, with local authorities being able to specify rates up to 60% or higher in the areas of greatest need (RSS policy H1).

Until it is replaced by the adopted Regional Spatial Strategy, the **Cornwall Structure Plan** remains the statutory development plan for the County. Policies 8, 9 and 10 relate specifically to housing provision within the County. Policy 8 sets the Penwith annual housing rate at 220 per annum (slightly less than the draft RSS). Policy 9 advocates a mix of house type and tenure to meet the needs of the whole community and Policy 10 seeks the re-use of previously developed sites in urban areas and states that about 40% of all housing development should be on 'brownfield' sites.

4. Local Policy Guidance

Penwith Local Plan

The Penwith Local Plan is currently the development plan for the district. It will however be replaced by the documents and policies which make up the Local Development Framework.

Section 8 of the Local Plan is devoted entirely to Housing issues and includes policies directing the location and scale of new development as well as policies specifically related to providing affordable housing.

Policy H-1 of the Local Plan identifies a target of 1,400 (70 per year) affordable homes for the period 1991-2011 within the overall requirement for 4,800 (240 per year) new dwellings. From April 1991 to March 2006 a total of 774 affordable dwellings had been provided, a shortfall of 276 compared with the rate needed to meet the target. In order to meet this target Penwith needs to complete 125 affordable dwellings per year for the remaining 5 years of the plan period.

There is a rural exceptions policy in the Penwith Local Plan (Policy H-15) which provides for the development of small sites within or adjoining villages for affordable housing only, if there is a proven housing need within the particular locality. This approach can be carried forward in the Core Strategy and is supported by Government advice in recently issued Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing, and also the draft Regional Spatial Strategy.

In 2004 the Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing. This document will need to be reviewed as part of the Local Development Framework and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

In 2001 Baker Associates undertook an urban capacity study on behalf of all the local authorities in Cornwall. This study investigated the suitability of sites in the towns of Penzance/Newlyn, Hayle, and St. Ives (including Carbis Bay) for housing development. The results of this study lead to the Council allocating specific sites in the main towns for housing development via the Penwith Local Plan. A requirement for a specified proportion of affordable housing was included in the relevant Proposal within the Local Plan for the majority of these sites.

Penwith Community Strategy (the Penwith Vision)

The Penwith Community Strategy has already been prepared by the Council, in conjunction with the Local Strategic Partnership, which is made up of public, private and voluntary

organisations. The Community Strategy sets out the main issues for Penwith and what the Council intends to do to improve the social, economic and environmental circumstances in the District.

The aim of the Community Strategy is to co-ordinate the work of organisations to address issues more effectively. PPS12 advises that the local development framework should be a key component in the delivery of the community strategy, setting out its spatial aspects where appropriate and providing a long-term spatial vision, and that local development documents should express those elements of the community strategy that relate to the development and use of land.

The Penwith Vision includes Housing as one of its key outcomes, Outcome 2, which identifies Penwith as *"an area that has sufficient quality housing for all our community needs"*. Outcome 2 also identifies the following issues:-

- Currently there are 2,000 households on the housing register looking for affordable housing (approximately 7% of the total number of occupied properties in the district);
- The ability of households in Penwith to afford housing is linked with the high cost of housing and low incomes whether in work or on benefits;
- Currently residents need 11 x single income to buy an average house. Even if the housing market declined by 25% in value, Penwith householders will still need 8 x single income;
- The expectation of a longer life, new households moving into the area to take advantage of the quality of life and the existing residents' families creating newer and smaller households add further pressure on the supply of housing. This combined with demands for the tourism industry whereby the resident population in Penwith increases from 60,000 to over 104,000 (72% increase) and results in around 3,200 properties (10%) in use for tourism, second homes, or lying vacant;
- There are 2,920 second homes in Penwith (approximately 10% of the total number of occupied properties in the district).

The Penwith Vision objectives relating to affordable housing which can be addressed through the Core Strategy include:-

- Identifying new ways of delivering housing that local people can afford by 2025;
- Ensuring that at least 30% of new homes being built by developers are affordable homes in the towns on developments of 15 dwellings or more;
- Ensuring that at least 50% of new homes being built by developers are affordable homes in the villages on developments of 2 dwellings or more;
- Ensuring that new housing developments on the edge of villages and towns are 100% affordable housing (rural exceptions policy);
- Maximizing the use of brown field sites.

However, most of these targets relate to the policy targets set within the Penwith Local Plan. Through the process of developing the Core Strategy the Council is seeking to establish whether the existing targets are still relevant, or whether a higher percentage of affordable homes in all new developments should be sought, or lower site size thresholds set. The Council will also be examining whether housing development in certain villages should be restricted to affordable housing only in order to meet the housing needs of that particular settlement or locality.

West Cornwall Housing Market Assessment

Housing markets are dynamic, and do not fit neatly within individual local authority administrative boundaries. The government requires an increased emphasis on joint local authority working across respective boundaries, and within regions / sub-regions. It has recognised and delineated a West Cornwall Housing Market Area, which comprises the districts of Penwith, Kerrier, Carrick, Restormel and part of North Cornwall. The five district authorities have been working closely together for the past year to gather evidence of the various factors and forces at work that influence the housing market within the Area; and to assess the different housing needs and identify how they can best be addressed. The results of the study, and the associated evidence base, will inform the Housing Strategy for both the Penwith District and the South West Region. The results will also inform the development of the Core Strategy, and subsequently Area Action Plans which are programmed to be produced for Penzance & Newlyn, Hayle, St Ives & Carbis Bay, and the remaining rural area.

Penwith Housing Strategy 2003-2008

The Penwith Housing Strategy is an over-arching document that reviews housing-related issues in the District, setting out housing objectives and establishing priorities for action both by the local authority and by other service providers and stakeholders. The Strategy is consistent with national policy and is designed to deliver regional and sub-regional strategies as well as meeting the authority's wider objectives as set out in the Community Strategy (the Penwith Vision).

The Penwith Housing Strategy has identified these key issues for Penwith:

- 3,000 households on the Homeseekers Register;
- scarcity of affordable private rented and housing to buy;
- not enough new private and social rented homes;
- too many families with children in temporary housing;
- low than average incomes;
- high levels of worklessness;
- insufficient grant for private sector renewal and disabled facilities grants;

- buoyant housing market encouraging landlords to sell up;
- low interest rates encouraging purchase for investment

In 2004 the Council established an Affordable Housing Task Force to bring together dedicated housing, planning and legal expertise to aid the delivery of additional affordable homes in Penwith. The Task Force aims to facilitate the provision of 100 new affordable homes per year.

5. Distributing housing in Penwith

The Core Strategy development plan document of the Local Development Framework will contain policies that will distribute the overall District housing requirement to suitable settlements in Penwith. The Council is not proposing to allocate specific sites for housing at this stage, but simply to look at which towns and villages are suitable for additional housing growth and at what scale. Specific sites for housing development (including for affordable housing, either wholly or in part) will subsequently be examined and allocated, as appropriate, as part of the process of preparing the programmed Area Action Plans for Penzance & Newlyn, Hayle, St Ives & Carbis Bay and the remaining rural area.

In line with Government advice and the spatial strategy of the Cornwall Structure Plan, the existing Penwith Local Plan places an emphasis on the provision of housing in the urban areas where it would be close to job opportunities and facilities and services. Most new housing development, therefore, is planned to be concentrated in the main towns – Penzance / Newlyn, St Ives (including Carbis Bay), and Hayle, predominantly through the re-use of previously developed land and buildings. A number of specific sites within the towns are proposed for housing development in the Local Plan, and Policy H-3 provides for the development of other previously developed ('brownfield') and small (0.3 hectare or less) 'greenfield' sites within the towns to make a contribution towards meeting overall housing requirements.

In relation to the main towns, Policy H-13 of the Local Plan provides that where a proposal is for 15 or more dwellings, or the site measures 0.5 hectare or more in area, an element of affordable housing will be sought through negotiation. Expanding on this, the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing advises that at least 30%, or more where viability allows, will be sought. Further, Policy H-3 of the Local Plan specifically provides, at sub-section (ii), for the development of schemes exclusively for affordable housing on greenfield sites within or on the edge of the main towns.

The Local Plan also provides for small scale housing developments, related to the needs arising from the existing population, in the rural area of Penwith. Through Policies H-4, H-5 and H-6 the Plan sets out a hierarchy of settlements where development is considered appropriate. Specifically, Policy H-4 provides for the development of small sites, up to 0.15 hectare in size, in the town of St Just; whilst Policy H-5 allows for the development of small sites, up to 0.15 hectare in size and which do not form part of a larger undeveloped area, in the following smaller towns / larger villages:

- Madron
- St Buryan
- Heamoor

- Pendeen
- Gulval (Trevarrack)
- Goldsithney
- Ludgvan (Lower Quarter)
- St Erth
- Crowlas
- Lelant
- Long Rock
- Connor Downs
- Marazion

In addition, Policy H-6 of the Local Plan provides for the development of proposals for one or two dwellings, on a site wholly within the village which has built development on at least three sides and does not form part of a larger undeveloped area, within the following smaller villages:

- Mousehole
- Relubbus
- Paul
- Perranuthnoe
- Newbridge
- Rosudgeon-Perran Downs
- Nancledra
- Canonstown
- Trewellard
- Phillack
- Sennen Cove
- Angarrack
- Sennen Churchtown
- Porthcurno
- Carnhell Green
- Wall - Reawla

Additional Policy H-7 of the Local Plan precludes housing development, other than the conversion of suitable existing buildings, in the following villages in order to protect their special character and setting:

- Gulval Churchtown
- Gwinear Churchtown
- Ludgvan Churchtown
- Gwithian Churchtown
- Sancreed Churchtown
- Zennor Churchtown
- Lamorna
- Halsetown
- Treen

In line with the rural White Paper published in November 2000, the Council's aim has been *“to match every new market house with an affordable one”*. Accordingly, Policy H-13 of the Local Plan provides that an element of affordable housing will be sought through negotiation in proposals for 2 or more dwellings, subject to financial viability, in settlements

with a population of 3,000 or less. This requirement relates to all of the smaller towns / larger villages and smaller villages listed under Policies H-5 and H-6.

Acknowledging Government advice, the Local Plan seeks to strictly control other new house building in the countryside and away from established settlements. Such development requires special justification, for example where a new dwelling is essential for farm or forestry workers to live close to their place of work. Policy H-8 refers.

Policy H-9 of the Local Plan provides for the on-site replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside, whilst Policy H-10 provides for the sub-division of existing dwellings into smaller self-contained units or the change of use of premises to houses in multiple occupation where the dwellings are within the towns and villages listed in Policies H-5, H-6 and H-7. In other locations such development is permitted provided that the building is within safe and convenient walking distance of a range of community facilities and services.

Policy H-11 of the Local Plan provides for the conversion of non-residential buildings to dwellings within the towns and villages listed in Policies H-5, H-6 and H-7. Outside towns and villages the priority is securing re-use of such buildings for employment purposes (including tourism accommodation) before residential use is considered.

As an exception to other policies in the Local Plan for the provision of general housing, Policy H-15 provides for the development of small 'rural exception' sites, which would not otherwise be granted planning permission. Such sites are required to be located in or on the edge of St Just or a village which has a general shop, a public transport service and, where family dwellings are proposed, a primary school within safe and convenient walking distance; and to genuinely provide affordable housing.

In 2004 the Council undertook and produced a Community Facilities Survey to provide an objective 'baseline' for the facilities and services available in settlements across Penwith and to aid review of the locational strategy and policies of the Local Plan, including the hierarchy and continued suitability for development of the settlements specifically identified under Policies H-5 and H-6. As part of the process of developing the evidence base and the options for the emerging Core Strategy, as part of the Local Development Framework process, the Council intends to undertake a further survey during 2007 to provide up-to-date information on the facilities and services available. Together with consultation responses received, this will help shape the Council's preferred policy direction.

6. Providing a variety of housing types

We need to provide a mix of housing units to reflect the different needs of people living in Penwith. This includes houses and flats of different sizes and tenures (i.e. to rent, buy or for shared ownership).

Currently, the mix of housing type is largely determined by the market. However, as a local authority, we should seek to achieve a mix of different housing types on larger-scale developments and on affordable housing sites to ensure that the needs of different sizes of households and households with different income levels are catered for.

A report commissioned by West Cornwall Together shows that in Penwith 23% of the economically active population are self-employed. Higher levels of self-employment were apparent in more outlying areas, where there were also high percentages of people working

at home. This underlines the need for people in isolated communities to find alternatives to traditional employment, but may also reflect the high level of entrepreneurialism in sectors such as the creative industries and tourism which are prevalent in these areas. With high percentages of people working from home the Council is considering whether **live-work** accommodation should be provided for, especially in the more rural settlements.

Live-work accommodation is where there is provision of an office or workshop space within a house, which can support the reduction in the need to travel and offer flexibility in work-life balance. Live-work units may be more acceptable in some rural communities, which have access to facilities and services.

There is also a need to identify sites for **Extra Care Housing** in Penwith to reflect the ageing population in Cornwall. In 2005 The Institute of Public Care (IPC) was commissioned to assist in the development of a housing and related care strategy for older people between now and 2028. The study identified that approximately 5,000 extra care units would be required across the County by 2028 to meet the needs of the ageing population.

Population change 2003-2028: ages 65-84 and 85+

	Population (thousands)		% change	Population (thousands)		% change
	65-84: 2003	65-84: 2028		85+: 2003	85+: 2028	
Penwith District	11.8	17.8	50.85	1.9	3.8	100

7. Building at higher densities

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy sets a requirement for new housing to be built at densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare. At 30-50 dwellings per hectare, it is possible to build a mix of house types of varying sizes and still provide space for car parking and gardens.

Other benefits of developing housing at higher densities includes that there is a higher catchment population within the immediate area to support shops and services, and a greater proportion of people are able to walk or cycle to reach them.

In Penwith, we have to consider what fits with the characteristics of the District and seek housing densities that are appropriate to our particular conditions and the largely rural nature of the District. We also have to balance housing densities against providing housing which meets local needs and limiting the amount of new development required on green field sites around our towns.

8. Second Homes

In 2004, there were 2,900 second homes in Penwith, or around 10% of the available homes. At the same time there were 2,000 local people seeking a permanent home. We need to continue to make full use of Second Homes Council Tax funding; since 2004, £1.3 million of the additional tax on second homes has been redirected to affordable housing. Penwith was

the first authority to use this tax as additional funding to buy land and build new affordable properties.

The Penwith Vision objectives relating to second homes which can be addressed through the Core Strategy include:-

- Fully invest up to £3m in the delivery of new affordable homes in Penwith up to 2009, through the use of Second Homes Council Tax;
- Make full use of opportunities within villages including Rural “Exception” Sites and edge of town developments for 100% affordable homes;
- Investigate a “homes for local needs only” policy, which has been supported in National Parks in England.

9. Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

The Core Strategy must consider the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers as the Council is required to allocate sites. The Cornwall Assessment for Gypsies and Travellers undertaken by a partnership of Cornwall County Council and the six Cornish district Councils in 2006 highlights the need for the provision of at least one residential site and one transit site in the Penwith district by 2011. Residential sites should allow for the provision of 8-10 pitches, whereas transit sites should allow for 5-6 pitches. The Report recommends that the permanent site and the transit site should remain separate from each other and that the transit site should be located near Penzance.

In the past, the provision of accommodation for gypsies and travellers has been mainly in remote locations, away from main towns and sustainable villages. National government policy views these types of locations as unsustainable as these sites do not have good access to jobs, services and community facilities. The approach that will be followed to provide accommodation for gypsies and travellers will need to be consistent with the Core Strategy for Penwith.

10. Provision for Migrant Workers

In 2003 the Cornwall Strategic Partnership identified a need to understand the issues facing migrant workers in Cornwall. With the assistance of Jobcentre Plus it established a Migrant Workers Task Group (a partnership bringing together key agencies with an interest in Migrant Workers). The following definition of 'migrant workers' was agreed by the Task Group (based upon a definition used by Working Lives Research Institute, London Metropolitan University):

“Migrant workers are defined as those people, born outside the U.K., who have come to the U.K. within the last five years, specifically to find or take up work (including both manual and professional), whether intending to remain permanently or temporarily and regardless of whether documented or undocumented.”

The aims of the Task Group are:

- To ensure that the positive role played by migrant workers within the Cornish economy is not overlooked;
- To identify the barriers that exist in providing equality of service to migrant workers and developing solutions to overcome these.

Following a successful bid for funding to the Government Office for the South West by Inclusion Cornwall (a thematic sub-group of the Cornwall Strategic Partnership), LINC (Local Intelligence Network Cornwall) was commissioned to carry out research into the issue. The aim of the research was to increase the level of knowledge about migrant workers in Cornwall. Its report, *'Migrant Workers – Research into the issues affecting migrant workers in Cornwall'*, was subsequently published in October 2006. The research looked at a number of issues, including housing, employment, access to services, exclusion, recruitment and training.

The issue of migrant workers has become more topical since 2004 with the accession of 10 countries into the European Union, including 8 from eastern and central Europe. In the past the tendency was for migrant workers to move to urban centres. However, a recent phenomenon has been the movement of people to rural areas, including the South West, particularly Cornwall.

The *'West Cornwall Together Action Plan 2005 – 2006'*, which is designed to be used in conjunction with the partnership's three year strategy – *'Delivering Together 2003 – 2006'*, includes an objective (D2a) *"to improve living and working conditions for migrant workers"*. In addition to the above-mentioned research, the work of the Cornwall Strategic Partnership has seen a number of important outcomes, including production of an information pack, *'Welcome to Cornwall: Information for Migrant Workers'*, which is now available, and the launch of a *'Responsible Employer Scheme'*.

The number of migrant workers fluctuates according to the agricultural season, although available research puts the figure for Cornwall at 25,000, with the highest concentrations in Penwith and Kerrier. The presence of migrant workers in the community gives rise to a number of issues. Of particular relevance from a planning perspective is the issue of accommodation. Most migrant workers employed in the agricultural industry are housed in caravans either on farms or tourist caravan sites. In the former case this is often without the necessary planning permission, and in the latter case in breach of holiday occupancy conditions prohibiting permanent residential occupation. Migrant workers are also accommodated in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HIMOs). The available evidence indicates that the overall standard of accommodation provided for migrant workers is seriously substandard.

The Cornwall Strategic Partnership is continuing to develop strategies for promoting greater social inclusion of migrant workers. However, there are areas where Penwith District Council, through the Local Development Framework process and emerging Development Plan Documents, could improve its effectiveness in dealing with issues related to migrant workers, particularly poor accommodation. Evidence from practice elsewhere in the country indicates that the best way of accommodating temporary agricultural workers is through inspected, decent accommodation on farms, where it is easier to recognise, inspect and enforce standards, than through dispersed HIMOs. Appropriate planning policies could be developed to facilitate this approach in appropriate locations.

Penwith District Council has played a key role in protecting the welfare of migrant workers

since 2003, and adopted a multi-agency approach in 2005 to the inspection of houses in multiple occupation overcrowded by migrant workers. The formation of the Migrant Workers Action Group (Migwag), a multi-agency group set up 2 years ago by Kerrier District Council with the help of Penwith officers, has been recognised as an example of good practice in a recent publication by the Audit Commission, "Crossing Borders", which considers the way in which Councils are responding to the influx of migrant workers. The group has been successful in promoting better conditions in West Cornwall, in partnership with other agencies such as the police, probation, fire service, customs and excise gangmaster licensing authority, and the Health and Safety executive. Migwag has now extended fully into Penwith and become a West Cornwall Initiative. For the future, Penwith District Council will identify key officers to sit on and be a part of this group to continue to tackle the issues identified regarding migrant workers and feed into the Cornwall Strategic Partnership's Migrant Workers Task Group.