

## Questions on Parish Housing Numbers

To be returned to [ldf@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@chichester.gov.uk) by Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2012

### Birdham Parish

The new Local Plan Core Strategy will include an indicative number of homes on non-strategic sites to be provided in each parish over the Plan period to 2029. For your Parish, we are proposing a range of between 50 and 100 homes (an average of 3.3 to 6.7 homes per year). In line with the Government's growth strategy, we would ask you to adopt a positive stance to the exercise and consider all options to achieving the target.

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>1</b>	<p>Are there any specific factors that we should know about that would prevent you from achieving our proposed minimum figure for your parish over the period to 2029?</p>	<p>Birdham is a compact, medium sized, attractive harbour village that has in the past developed in a measured way to sustain but not overload its amenities and ensuring that most homes are in close vicinity of the village facilities.</p> <p>In recent years, however, residents have become increasingly concerned about the threat of over-development and inadequate and failing infrastructure in the area. Flooding, drainage and transport are considered by residents to be major constraining factors in the future development of Birdham and other settlements in the Manhood Peninsula. There is also an overriding fear that excessive incremental development of a suburban nature is degrading our environment and, consequently, will impact our tourism industry. Tourism has been identified in recent surveys as the Manhood's main economy and one that underpins the tourism economy of the entire Chichester District.</p> <p>However, Birdham residents recognise that some growth of any settlement is necessary to ensure continued sustainability and, as a result, have begun to prepare a neighbourhood plan. This process is bringing residents and businesses together in a constructive manner to create a long-term, integrated and sustainable strategy for the future of the village. It is hoped that CDC will recognise this and not encourage premature over-development that will make our democratic efforts meaningless.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village layout and proximity to Chichester Harbour. One of the most attractive and sustainable aspects of Birdham is its compact layout and its harbour-side location. The village – and all of its amenities - essentially lies between the</li> </ul>

A286 and the harbour. Currently, most homes are within easy, and safe, walking distance of the shop, school, church, village hall and recreation ground. However, its location also means that the village is surrounded to the north, west and east by Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, an obvious constraint to its development. Meanwhile, any development south of the A286 would be in danger of creating ribbon development and possible coalescence with the conservation area and neighbouring settlement of Somerley. Any development south of the A286 also would require the construction of a formal crossing on the Birdham Straight in order for people to safely access amenities including the school and village hall. The A286 is the only road serving the western side of the peninsula and is constantly busy with a 40 mph speed limit along the entire southern perimeter of Birdham. The parish would also wish to avoid any development that might threaten the viability of important business sectors in the community such our marine related industry, nursery centres, campsites etc.

- Flooding. Flooding and inadequate drainage has become an increasing concern for residents during the last decade. Indeed, such has been the level of local concern regarding flooding over the years that Birdham was one of the first communities in Chichester District to undertake a drainage survey. That survey indicated that drainage and flooding is a severe problem in many areas of the parish, a fact that has been highlighted by the long-standing and not yet resolved drainage issues relating to two recent building developments in the village (Longmeadow and Pipers Mead). Indeed Posford Haskoning who undertook an extensive drainage survey of the entire Manhood, commissioned by the Manhood Peninsula Partnership, highlighted Bell Lane of Birdham Parish (B2198) as one of two areas in which they were unable to identify any runoff drainage infrastructure or determine which way runoff water went. During the last few years an increasing number of properties in and adjacent to Birdham have flooded, and this year several dozen properties in the Birdham Parish suffered extensive flooding, forcing families to have to vacate their properties for refurbishment. In June 2012 many homes

throughout the main part of the village and along Bell Lane suffered severe flooding with some families unlikely to move back into their properties before 2013. The village has also suffered from sewage difficulties with mains drainage backing up during heavy rainfall. Failure of old main drains in both West and East Wittering also has resulted in raw sewage having to be extracted and taken by truck to Sidlesham sewage works on several occasions during the last year.

- Economy. Another constraining factor lies with our economy. As the document Towards ICZM points out, tourism is the principle economy of the Manhood, with horticulture and agriculture also important contributors. Both Towards ICZM (accepted by CDC as a material planning document) and the Manhood Peninsula Destination Management Plan (prepared by representatives of the local business and residential community and the local authorities and major landowners) provide evidence that the tourism industry in the Manhood is linked very closely to its environmental character. Both strategic planning documents also point out the potential of the Medmerry Managed Realignment to allow the Manhood to enhance the value of its environmental tourism product. As the CPRE pointed out to the Planning Inspector at the Madestein Glasshouse Planning Appeal, the environment and tranquil nature of the Manhood Peninsula makes it a 'jewel in the crown' along the crowded Sussex and Hampshire coastal plain and an important environmental and economic asset for the district. This is very much the case for Birdham, a rural and harbour side village that is home to several important businesses sectors that both rely on and support the local tourist economy, including retail nurseries, campsites and bed and breakfasts and two marinas and their associated businesses. Our environment is very much a key part of the entire tourist economy and that should be recognised in the Local Development Plan. As such we would seek to avoid any further encroachment of the AONB as well as ribbon and overly suburban development and any development that threatens the local economy.

- Transport /Accessibility. This is a very real – and growing - concern for Birdham

residents and one that all parishes on the western side of the Manhood Peninsula think is not adequately recognised by CDC and WSCC. On MANY days during the year, both during the week and at weekends, between April and October the A286 becomes so congested that it is almost at a standstill due to visitor and residential traffic. The local authorities seem to think our traffic concerns are centred on queuing at junctions onto the A27. However, it is frequent 'standstill' traffic along the length of the A286 south of Chichester that is far more debilitating for local residents and businesses. As a result of the traffic situation locals are forced to plan their travel carefully, often avoiding journeys south from Chichester between 10 am to 2pm and north to Chichester between 4pm and 7pm on sunny days. Although locals can use the back roads during these long periods of almost stationary traffic, this is not an option for delivery lorries or public transport users. Buses are often trapped on the road for two hours or more. Anyone needing to travel by bus either to get home or go to work/hospital/visit somewhere during these periods face journey times of up to two hours to travel just three or four miles. This is an increasingly serious issue for both local businesses and residents and outgoing and incoming workers, particular poorer paid shift workers reliant on public transport, including carers.

We are not necessarily looking to CDC or WSCC to solve the seasonal congestion on the A286 as we do not wish to discourage tourism, because of its importance to our economy. But we do want the local authorities to recognise that it is a serious constraining factor to further development in the area. The proposed numbers for the Local Plan Core Strategy for West Wittering, Birdham, East Wittering and Donnington would mean up to 900 additional homes needing to use the A286 daily. We believe this number is not viable and cannot be considered in the Plan until CDC has undertaken sufficient monitoring of seasonal traffic use on the A286 to provide evidence to show it is sustainable or to provide an effective solution to the problem.

- Employment – Commuting in and out of the peninsula is becoming increasingly problematic. While on the peninsula much of

the employment, directly and indirectly is related to tourism, which could be adversely impacted by overdevelopment, as most tourists stay in the area because it is the only relatively undeveloped stretch of coastline in Sussex and Hampshire. We believe that an excess of residential development on a low-lying, cul-de-sac peninsula, with its severe drainage and transport issues, is only sustainable if there are sufficient jobs on the peninsula to absorb the increased population. We would wish to see evidence that this is the case.

To conclude: We contend that excessive development on the Manhood Peninsula could have a material adverse impact on our environment, and our economy and, in light of the severe existing drainage and transport problems, our social well-being and would not be in accordance with the economic, social and environmental balance sought by the NPPF. It would also not be in keeping with the towards ICZM framework for the future of the peninsula drawn up by residents, businesses and representatives of the local authorities. Birdham is a compact, medium sized, attractive harbour village that has in the past developed in a measured way to sustain but not overload its amenities and ensuring that most homes are in close vicinity of the village facilities.

In recent years, however, residents have become increasingly concerned about the threat of over-development and inadequate and failing infrastructure in the area.

Flooding, drainage and transport are considered by residents to be major constraining factors in the future development of Birdham and other settlements in the Manhood Peninsula.

There is also an overriding fear that excessive incremental development of a suburban nature is degrading our environment and, consequently, will impact our tourism industry. Tourism has been identified in recent surveys as the Manhood's main economy and one that underpins the tourism economy of the entire Chichester District.

However, Birdham residents recognise that some growth of any settlement is necessary to ensure continued sustainability and, as a result, have begun to prepare a neighbourhood plan. This process is bringing

		<p>residents and businesses together in a constructive manner to create a long-term, integrated and sustainable strategy for the future of the village. It is hoped that CDC will recognise this and not encourage premature over-development that will make our democratic efforts meaningless.</p>
2	<p>Do you consider that our proposed maximum figure is a realistic upper limit for new housing in your parish over the period to 2029?</p>	<p>The considerable constraints listed above and the severity of their impact on residents' well-being (particularly the constraints relating to flooding and transport/accessibility) and on the local economy, together with the amount of housing development currently in progress in the village, means that considerable spend on infrastructure would be needed to enable the village to meet the upper limit.</p>
3	<p>Are there any sites or general locations within the parish that you consider could be suitable for future housing development?</p>	<p>In order for the Neighbourhood Plan to be a democratic and worthwhile process that can only be determined after the plan has been completed and voted on by parishioners.</p>
4	<p>Are there any issues relating to the timing of future development that you wish to highlight?</p>	<p>We would not wish to see any major development until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Neighbour Plan is complete.</li> <li>• The flooding/drainage issues of the parish have been properly addressed and mitigated.</li> <li>• Our accessibility issues have been recognised and addressed by the local authorities.</li> <li>• Formal crossings are provided on the A286 and/or Bell Lane if new housing is located south of the main village.</li> </ul> <p>In light of the numbers of houses recently constructed and in the process of being constructed in the village, and to prevent too much strain on local facilities, such as the school, we would expect development to be spread over the length of the plan rather than front-loaded.</p>

<b>5</b>	Are there any specific improvements or facilities that the community would like to see provided as a result of the development?	See earlier responses.
<b>6</b>	Is your community likely to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan <sup>①</sup> ?	Yes we have already begun the process.

① As introduced by the Localism Act 2011, a neighbourhood plan is a statutory development plan prepared at a neighbourhood (e.g. parish) level, setting out a vision for the local area and local planning policies for the use and development of land, for example identifying where new shops, offices or homes should go and what green spaces should be. Neighbourhood Plans have to be compatible with national policies and the Local Plan and should be focused on guiding development rather than stopping it.

If you have any queries please call the Planning Policy team on **01243 534571**