

### **Policy H9: Housing mix**

In order to achieve mixed and balanced communities, the Council will expect new market housing to support delivery of the housing mix identified through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015, its update in 2018 or other recent evidence. The final housing mix proposed will be agreed between the applicant and the Council.

With the exception of the site allocations in this plan (identified in policies H4 to H7) sites delivering 20 or more units, will be encouraged to provide:

- a. 5% for sale as self-build plots. Such plots must be provided with a means of access and utility services to the boundaries of the plot; and
- b. 10% as accessible single storey homes which can be in the form of flats or bungalows.

As part of ensuring a wide mix of accommodation to meet the needs of Purbeck's population, proposals for sheltered housing, retirement living, age specific housing, care homes or extra care units for the elderly and/or disabled people will be supported through individual developments at appropriate locations in accordance with the settlement hierarchy and in agreement with local health and social care providers.

Where an applicant considers there are significant economic viability constraints that would prevent a mix of housing in accordance with the policy, they will be required to provide full justification of the exceptional circumstances to the Council's satisfaction. Where a viability assessment is required, it should refer back to the viability assessment that informed the plan, providing evidence of what has changed since then. Any viability assessment will be funded by the applicant and should reflect the government's recommended approach as set out in National Planning Practice Guidance. The applicant will be expected to fund the independent verification of the submitted viability assessment by a person appointed by the Council.

#### **Meeting local needs**

Local policies in neighbourhood development plans should support the general principles around providing the sizes and types of homes needed in Purbeck. Where justified with robust local evidence, local policies in neighbourhood plans may set distinct local requirements on the mix of different sizes and types of homes. Where neighbourhood plans set a distinct local requirement on the type of homes proposed this must be done in agreement with local health and social care providers.

### Housing optional technical standards

- 181.** Through its review of housing standards, the government took measures in 2015 to standardise the type of specific requirements that can be placed upon the contribution of homes by local authorities through the planning system. This meant that a range of previous local enhanced standards for energy efficiency, space and design quality were removed and replaced by a number of standardised "Housing Optional Technical Standards". Enhancements to the building regulations implemented through planning, the Optional Technical Standards include provision for water efficiency, space standards and accessible homes.
- 182.** As Purbeck is not part of a water stress area as shown on the "Water Stress in England" map, there is no evidence that would justify optional technical standards in respect of water efficiency. The Council also considers that application of the Nationally Described Space Standards would be too prescriptive for an area with such varied townscapes as Purbeck. However, from the assessments the Council has undertaken, there is a justification for introducing optional accessibility standards. This assessment has been undertaken with regard to the advice set out in planning guidance to demonstrate need for the optional standard.
- 183.** This Optional Technical Standard allows Local Authorities to require a proportion of new homes to comply with optional categories of Part M of the Building Regulations 2010. These are M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and adaptable homes that provide enhanced accessibility features and can be adapted at a later date, or M4(3) Category 3: wheelchair accessible homes. All new homes must presently comply with M4(1) Category 1: Visitable homes.
- 184.** As explained above, the SHMA has demonstrated that Purbeck's population is ageing and will continue to do so over the life of the Purbeck Local Plan. This will increase numbers of residents and households who will suffer from long-term health problems and mobility issues. Evidence regarding Purbeck's existing housing stock is presented in The English Housing Survey 2012-13. This highlights that most existing homes in Purbeck are poorly designed for use by people with disabilities or long-term health problems that affect their mobility. It notes that 64% of the homes surveyed provide no, or only one of the visitability features<sup>5</sup> that are currently a mandatory requirement of Building Regulations part M4(1).

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<sup>5</sup> Visitability features are defined as a home having the following: 1. level access: there are no steps between the gate/pavement and the front door into the home to negotiate; 2. flush threshold: a wheelchair can be wheeled directly into the home, with no obstruction higher than 15mm; 3. sufficiently wide doors and circulation space; and 4. WC at entrance level