



The Role of the Rural Housing Enabler

There are currently around 40 Rural Housing Enablers (RHE) across the country as part of a national programme to increase the provision of affordable housing in rural communities. In Essex the RHE is employed and managed by the Rural Community Council of Essex and acts as an independent advisor who can provide impartial assistance in the following ways;

- Help parish councils to understand the processes and options for achieving affordable housing
- Identify housing need which cannot be currently met by the market
- Develop and maintain positive relationships with housing and planning authorities in pursuit of the provision of affordable housing
- Identify potential sites and liaise closely with landowners and planning authorities over constraints and opportunities
- Liaise closely with local housing associations and housing partnerships to facilitate a smooth handover from pre-development to development processes
- Operate independently to achieve consensus among partner stakeholders, and contribute to relevant strategies at national, regional and local level to deliver affordable rural housing

(These key points are reproduced as identified in the Affordable Rural Housing Commission – Final Report, May 2006)

The key aims of the role of the RHE are:

- To assess housing need by working with the local community and parish councils through Housing Needs Surveys
- To raise awareness of local housing need
- To work with landowners, planning authorities, housing associations and developers to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in rural Essex

