

**Committee:** Local Plan Panel  
**Title:** Affordable Housing Policy

**Date:** 8 February  
2024

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## Summary

1. This report provides some background information on the council's emerging affordable housing policy in order to assist the LPP's discussion on this matter.

## Recommendations

2. That the LPP provides its views on the emerging policy.

## Financial Implications

3. Within existing local plan budget.

## Background Papers

4. The council's draft / Regulation 18 Local Plan can be found online, in local libraries and in the reception at the council offices. [The Draft Local Plan - Uttlesford District Council](#)

## Impact

Communication / Consultation	The final draft (Regulation 19) Plan is to be published for consultation in summer 2024 for eight weeks. Consultation is to be extended from the statutory 6 weeks to 8 to account for summer holidays.
Community safety	None
Equalities	None
Health & Safety	None
Human Rights / Legal	None
Sustainability	The Local Plan will have positive impacts on sustainability across the district.
Ward-specific Impacts	All wards
Workforce / Workplace	None

## Situation

5. The emerging Local Plan seeks to meet housing needs; to provide homes and access to the housing market and to deliver affordable housing for those priced out or unable to access housing at market prices.
6. The Uttlesford Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) identified that 261 households p.a. in the district are currently in affordable housing need, which equates to 38% of the annual Local Housing Need figure for the district - 684 dwellings. However, the link between affordable and overall needs is complex and many of those identified as having an affordable housing need are already in housing and thus do not generate a net additional need for a home. If for this reason we exclude existing households, our annual affordable need would be 192 pa dwellings, which equates to 28% of our annual Local Housing Need.
7. Affordability in the District is worsening with the workplace based median affordability ratio in Uttlesford at 13.18 in 2022, based on the ratio between median house prices and full-time earnings.
8. Draft policy CP56 of the emerging plan states:

*New residential development (including conversions and changes of use) with the capacity to provide 10 or more self-contained units should provide 35% of the total dwellings as affordable dwellings.*

*Affordable dwellings should be delivered on-site. However, in exceptional circumstances a financial contribution may be accepted by the Council in order to provide affordable dwellings off-site where the other sites may be more appropriate to provide affordable dwellings than the site of the proposed development.*

*Affordable dwellings should incorporate a mix of tenures and sizes prioritising rented dwellings at social rent levels. To most effectively meet the district's housing needs the Council will require the following mix of tenure:*

- i. 25% of homes to be available as First Homes, and*
- ii. 70% of the remaining qualifying development will be affordable/ social rented, and 30% as other forms of affordable homes.*

*The dwelling mix should be in accordance with the most up-to-date LHNA (Table 11.1) unless an alternative approach can be demonstrated to be more appropriate where proven to be necessary due to viability constraints.*

*The exact tenure split on each site will be a matter for negotiation, taking account of up-to-date needs assessments and the characteristics of the area.*

*A minimum of 20% of affordable dwellings (for which the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating a person(s) to live in that dwelling) constructed should be built to Building Regulation Standard M4(3) Category*

*3: Wheelchair Accessible Standards, taking account of the suitability and viability of the site.*

*Affordable dwellings should be appropriately distributed throughout a new development and should be designed to a high quality, with the same or a consistent external appearance as for market dwellings. Where a site is subdivided, the Council will expect each sub-division to contribute proportionally towards achieving the amount of affordable dwellings which would have been applicable on the whole site.*

*Where a developer states that exceptional development costs mean it is not possible to meet the full requirements for the delivery of affordable dwellings the burden of proof will be on them to demonstrate this to the Council and the evidence must be supported by a PPG-compliant developer-funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).*

9. The LPP will be given a short presentation on the emerging affordable housing position and asked then to consider and give their views on the matter, which may include views on the overall levels of affordable housing and breakdown of housing tenures.
10. Further information can be found at 11.28 – 11.38 of the Regulation 18 Local Plan.