



## WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL



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### **Consultation on the Borough's Local Plan for Submission 2040**

The Wootton Neighbourhood Plan makes it abundantly clear that 'any new housing should help to broaden the range of stock available in the Parish with a priority for elderly accommodation, bungalows and 2-3 bedroom houses' (Key Themes, para 49)

#### **The existing Borough Local Plan 2030 Policy 59S - Housing mix states:**

New housing developments will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling size and type to meet the identified needs of the community including families with children, older people, people wishing to build their own homes and people with disabilities and special needs in accordance with the Council's current Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other current assessments of housing need including the Older Person's Accommodation Strategy, the Learning Disabilities Accommodation Strategy, the Mental Health Accommodation Strategy and evidence in respect of the needs of other specialist groups:

- i. All developments of 500 dwellings or more in suitable locations, will be required to include self-contained older persons housing, and/or supported living accommodation in accordance with the Council's most up to date statement of need on older person's accommodation.
- ii. All developments of 100 dwellings or more in suitable locations, will be required to include specialist housing including the needs of those with a learning disability or mental health need in accordance with the Council's most up to date statement of need.
- iii. On sites of 3 or more dwellings 49% of all new residential development should meet Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable dwellings) of approved Document M; Volume 1, and on sites of 20 or more dwellings a minimum of 5% of all market housing and 7% of affordable housing should meet Category 3 requirements.\*
- iv. All specialist housing for older people should meet Category 3 requirements. v. The Council will support Self Build and Custom Build housing

\*For clarification:

**Category 2** of the Approved Building Regulations = Accessible and adaptable dwellings – Optional, similar to Lifetime Homes (reasonably easy to adapt);

**Category 3** of the Approved Building Regulations = Wheelchair user dwellings – Optional, equivalent to wheelchair accessible standard (purpose built for a wheelchair-user).

**The Borough's Local Plan for Submission 2040 Policy DM3(S) Housing mix** proposes replacing the above policy with:

New housing developments will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling size and type to meet the identified needs of the community including families with children, older people, people wishing to build their own homes and

people with disabilities and special needs in accordance with the Council's current Local Housing Needs Assessment and other current assessments of housing need including the Older Person's Accommodation Strategy, the Learning Disabilities Accommodation Strategy, the Mental Health Accommodation Strategy (or their successor Strategies) and evidence in respect of the needs of other specialist groups.

All developments of 500 dwellings or more in suitable locations, will be required to include self-contained housing designed to meet the needs of older persons, and / or supported living accommodation in accordance with the Council's most up to date statement of need on older person's accommodation.

All developments of 100 dwellings or more in suitable locations, will be required to include specialist housing designed to meet the needs of those with a learning disability or mental health need in accordance with the Council's most up to date statement of need

- i. On sites of 3 or more dwellings 47% of all new residential development should meet Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable dwellings) of approved Document M; Volume 1, and on sites of 20 or more dwellings a minimum of 4% of all market housing and 6% of affordable housing should meet Category 3 requirements,
- ii. All specialist housing for older people should meet Category 3 requirements.

Affordable housing will be sought from all C3 development including and where a site provides a mix of C2 development and C3 dwellings, from the C3 element of the development. The reduction in percentages of accessible homes in the revised Local Plan 2040 policy is based on the Borough's independent Local Housing Needs Assessment (May 2021), and the figures are difficult to refute.

However, one of the main difficulties with the implementation of the current and proposed policy, is the lack of provision of single storey dwellings – not just ground floor flats, but especially bungalows).

### **In Summary**

Wootton Parish Council wishes to make it clear that Bedford Borough Council's expectation is, where Category 3 dwellings are required, they will be achieved by the provision of bungalows (i.e., houses on one level which are not part of a multi-storey block of dwellings).

*Sue Edgar Playford*

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