



Good Practice

Objective

Cummunity hubs and clusters	To raise awareness of rural housing Issues and gain support for affordable housing in rural parishes
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Detail

Our strategic objective is for rebalancing rural communities through the delivery of local housing and employment opportunities appropriate to the role, size and function of each settlement, or group of settlements, ensuring that development delivers community benefit.

The policy focuses rural development on Community Hubs and Community Clusters identified as being suitable for development by the communities themselves. This bottom up approach to rural planning seeks to engage with communities from the outset and is based on evidence gathered from earlier consultations that rural communities themselves have shown an appetite to accept development in a rural rebalance approach where this will help to maintain and improve community sustainability, supporting services infrastructure and facilities.

A key consideration in identifying Community Hubs and Community Clusters is the views of the local community regarding whether they wish to put themselves forward for this status, whether singly or as a part of a networked group of settlements. .

Outcomes

The Key to the success or otherwise of the Policy on Community hubs and Community Clusters as opposed to the continuation of the exceptions policy, rests on effective community engagement with the plan making process and with the development concepts concerned.

Rural areas will stay rural and villages will retain their separate, distinctive and varied character. Village based services will become more economically resilient and strengthened.

There are clear risks to the council from pursuing this bottom up approach to helping to create sustainable places within Shropshire both from none engagement with the process and potentially latent opposition to development per se, notwithstanding the community benefits that might be generated.

The Council is seeking to mitigate these risks through the use of interactive community engagement exercises over an extended period.

Author: Shropshire Council

Contact: Jake Berriman (Head of Strategy and Policy)

Jake.berriman@shropshire.gov.uk

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Rural Affordable Housing
Project

ruralhousing@hca.gsx.gov.uk

www.ruralaffordablehousing.org.uk

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