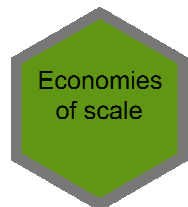


**Good Practice**

**Objective**



<p><b>Severn Voice (Parish clustering)</b></p>	<p>To help address capacity issues, the problems of identifying and developing land for affordable housing in communities which are not deemed sustainable in Planning terms and the economic viability of developing very small sites for affordable housing.</p>
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**Detail**

Severn Voice is a forum for parish councils in the Severn Vale in Stroud District and consists of representatives from Arlingham, Elmore, Frampton-on-Severn, Fretherne-with-Saul, Hardwicke, Longney & Epney, Moreton Valence, Slimbridge and Whitminster

The Severn Voice parish councils agreed to work together to undertake local housing needs surveys. As a result, each has a proven need for affordable housing which ranges from a need for just one affordable home in one parish to a need for nineteen in another. Total new affordable housing need for the Severn Voice group of parishes is thirty five.

Some of the Severn Voice parishes are small and remote in nature, with limited local facilities. Any further development, even of an 'Exceptions' nature, is unlikely due to planning constraints and the lack of availability of suitable land. Planners have accepted the principle of meeting the housing need from one parish in the group in another which has greater access to local facilities and is more sustainable in development terms.

## Outcomes

An exceptions site for around 14 dwellings has now been identified in one of the larger and more sustainable parishes and is being brought forward on the basis that this site can contribute to meeting the housing needs of all the Severn Voice group of parishes rather than just the needs of the parish in which the site is located. A further two sites in two other parishes are currently being examined which have the capacity to provide a further 10 affordable units.

The 'grouping' of parishes in this way makes engagement with the various parish councils easier and more time-efficient. The Rural Housing Enabler was able to undertake housing needs surveys simultaneously with all parishes in the group and attend only one set of parish meetings. Following the completion of the housing needs surveys, further consultation and updates have been carried out at the parish group meetings.

**Update – 2012** Severn Voice parish group now has planning for 14 affordable units, and a site for up to a further 30 affordable units is under early consideration.

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