



Good Practice

Objective

<p>Affordable housing developers' partnership</p>	<p>To share best practice and develop an understanding of the economic viability challenges faced by all members of the forum and ways of overcoming them</p>
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Detail

The partnership group is managed and facilitated by the local authority and is attended by partners developing affordable housing in the South Kesteven area. All housing association partners are formal partners with the council. Larkfleet, a private developer that attends, is not a formal partner because they do not manage the affordable housing stock, but they are a developing partner.

Private developer partners' attendance is to enable both the developing Registered Provider (RP) partners and Larkfleet to work in partnership to identify potential sites, share best practice and costs in bringing a site forward (commissioning housing needs surveys, site surveys etc), and to attend meetings (parish council, public, development control etc). This approach also encourages round table discussions on past, present and future sites. Problems and solutions are explored and a greater understanding of how both the private sector and the RP's operate develops.

The group meets quarterly to discuss the development programme. It also discusses housing needs, research projects, support for needs surveys, funding issues and site searches.

Outcomes

1. By working in partnership in an 'open' manner, all developing partners give the same message to landowners on their expectations. All partners have some form of resource to identify land and negotiate with agents/landowners.
2. By working in partnership the work load and financial implications can be shared between partners.
3. Economic viability – by sharing resources, ideas etc can assist with making a scheme work
4. All partners are willing to share their knowledge, give presentations and attend meetings not only representing their own organisation but the partnership as a whole to bring about the outcome for all concerned.
5. Many of our partners are involved with the community and can bring some 'best practice', ideas, suggestions etc to help get the community involved with a new development and help dismiss the negative culture often witness in rural locations
6. The partnership meetings are often attended by planning policy and development control colleagues. Also a colleague from Housing Solutions attends with knowledge of housing needs and homelessness in the area. Information is also provided from representatives who are on the Social Care Development Group with regards to special needs groups (physical disabilities, mental health, learning disabilities etc), individual cases are identified and brought to the partnership and more often than not, individual needs can be met on proposed development sites.
7. With colleagues from planning policy involved with the partnership there has, over the years, developed a better understanding for the need for affordable housing, and are more willing to look at alternative solutions to the provision of affordable housing in rural areas. This works both ways and partners are also willing to be flexible in their approach to the development of rural affordable housing.

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