

# MEETING HOUSING NEEDS

## A housing emergency – why are new homes needed?

6.1 Having a home is a basic necessity that provides shelter, security and can support health and well-being. Whether homes are owned, rented, in single occupancy or shared with others, the simple fact is that for many their home is not suitable to meet their needs and having a suitable home may not be affordable. Nationally, for many years there have not been enough new homes being built to meet our needs, and there has been an increasing gap between the price of those homes and being able to afford to buy or rent them – the cost of new homes has risen higher than wages. In Mid Devon (2019) full time employees can typically expect to spend around 9.3 times their workplace-based annual earnings on purchasing a home, higher than the England average ratio of 7.8. Average income in Mid Devon remains below the national average with a relatively low-pay economy, which means that local house prices are too high for many on low-medium incomes to afford. To improve social and economic inclusion, Plan Mid Devon will need to include policies to ensure the right number of new homes are planned across the district in the right places, and that there is sufficient choice of types of new homes (including their size and tenure and affordability) to help meet our housing needs. A question that we are often asked when preparing a new plan is ‘who are all these new homes for?’. A survey of residents in newly completed homes recently undertaken by the Council has found that 63% of moves to new build homes in Mid Devon are from within the district. 88% of moves are from either within the district or from Local Authority areas adjoining Mid Devon. Evidence shows that new houses



Bampton



being built in Mid Devon are therefore providing homes for local people. High house prices and a lack of homes that are affordable and suitable to meet housing needs in Mid Devon is part of what has been declared as a national housing emergency. The charity Shelter argues that 17.5 million people nationally are trapped by the housing emergency and the high cost of housing is at the heart of this crisis.

6.2 As a rural district, we also face a number of distinct housing challenges including a highly dispersed, ageing housing stock and pockets of social isolation (often relating to age, poverty, slow broadband speeds and lack of transport). Mid Devon also has an ageing population and projections indicate that the biggest rise in future population growth will occur amongst older people. There is a need to plan to meet these changing needs and ensure that older people get the housing and support they need. Additionally, there is also a need to pay particular attention to providing affordable and social rent properties alongside a strong commitment to having low-carbon, accessible and adaptable homes.

6.3 The provision of new housing also generates significant economic and social benefits. Research undertaken by the Home Builders Federation estimates that approximately 4.3 jobs are created for every home built. There are also significant local economic benefits where homes are built by SMEs or custom and self-builders. Our research indicates that 45 pence in every £1 in custom and self-build homes is spent locally<sup>10</sup>.

6.4 The provision of housing also contributes significant funding for infrastructure improvements and towards improving local services and facilities.

## What is Mid Devon's housing need?

6.5 The National Planning Policy Framework expects Councils to follow the standard method set out in Planning Practice Guidance for assessing local housing needs. The standard method identifies the minimum annual housing need figure and there is generally an expectation that the standard method will be used to inform plan preparation. The approach to calculating the standard method for housing need essentially combines two national data sets:

- 2014 based household projections<sup>11</sup>
- Latest local authority affordability ratios (house prices / wages)

6.6 The formula essentially takes a 10 year average of household projection and applies an adjustment factor in order to ensure that the minimum annual housing need starts to address the affordability of homes. In Mid Devon, the standard method calculation is as follows:



6.7 Therefore, the standard method housing need calculation in Mid Devon is **365 homes per annum**. This represents the minimum housing need figure that needs to be planned for, and is less than the 393 homes per annum that is planned for in the current adopted Mid Devon Local Plan. However, there may be a potential need for the 365 homes per annum to be uplifted. For example, the standard method does not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour. Therefore, there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the standard method indicates. Additionally, the Government is committed to reviewing the standard methodology. It is likely that the standard method calculation could increase over time in order to deliver the Government's aspirations to deliver 300,000 homes a year nationally. The housing need calculation and number of new homes in Mid Devon will form a key part of the next stage in preparing Plan Mid Devon, together with options for how this should be planned for across the district. The current timetable is for the publication of a 'Draft Policies and Site Options' consultation report in the summer of 2023.

## Meeting Affordable Housing Needs

6.8 One of the most fundamental components of the new Local Plan will be to provide more affordable housing to meet local needs and improve social and economic inclusion. As with many parts of the country, housing affordability is a significant issue in Mid Devon. Access to housing for those on lower incomes is only likely to be achieved through the provision of defined affordable housing at below market rent or price levels. The planning system therefore has an important role to play in the delivery of affordable housing and ensuring that the benefits of housing delivery go to a wider section of the local community. Affordable housing is defined as housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers). A full definition of affordable housing is provided in the National Planning Policy Framework but broadly, it includes two forms:

- **Affordable housing for rent** – means housing managed by a Registered Provider or Build to Rent landlord and let at subsidised levels. The Local Housing Allowance sets a rent level which can be covered by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and is therefore affordable to all households. It is therefore an appropriate maximum rental level for new affordable housing for rent. It is important to define the difference between affordable homes (those let at an affordable rent) and social rent homes:

**Social Rent** – Homes let at below the market rent by a registered provider. The rent level is calculated on a legal basis according to a formula based on property values and local earnings (target rent). This is set out in the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard. Typically these rents are around 50% of the local market rate.

**Affordable Rent** – Homes let at below market rent by a registered provider. The rent (including service charge) is set at up to 80% of the local market rent for an equivalent home.



- **Affordable home ownership** – products give a household the option to purchase at a subsidised price in various different way, either immediately or after some years of living in a property.

6.9 The majority of new affordable homes are built as a developer contribution on market housing schemes. The current local plan requires that on sites of 11 homes or more in Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton a target of 28% affordable homes will need to be provided. On sites elsewhere of 6 homes or more a target of 30% affordable homes will apply. It is too early at this stage for Plan Mid Devon to specify what target should be applied. Although this is something that will be identified as the plan progresses, once we have more clarity of affordable housing needs and an understanding of how such targets may affect development viability.

6.10 We are preparing a new Local Housing Needs Assessment, which will provide an up to date assessment of affordable housing needs across Mid Devon and help guide how we plan for and prioritise different tenures of affordable housing in new development. The next iteration of Plan Mid Devon will consider the proportion of affordable housing that could realistically be secured from market housing schemes, and consult on a series of options for this having regard to development viability. More focused surveys of housing need can also be undertaken in parishes. These can be used to help inform the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and community led housing schemes, including development proposals coming forward on rural exceptions sites within or adjoining villages.

## Build to Rent Homes

6.11 Increasing numbers of young people in Mid Devon face the prospect of never owning their own home. Rising house prices, restricted access to mortgages and a decreasing supply of affordable housing mean that, at the age of 30, four in ten young people will rely on the private rented sector to meet their housing needs. This is double the rate of previous generations.

6.12 Build to rent homes are purpose built housing that is typically 100% rented out. It can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses, but should be on the same site and/or contiguous with the main development. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more, and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control. The private rented sector's role in providing housing in Mid Devon has increased substantially in recent years. Between 2001 and 2011 the number of privately renting households grew by 79%<sup>12</sup>.

6.13 There is an opportunity to recognise the important role that Build to Rent can play in helping to meet the need for high quality, well-managed and secure private rented housing. Plan Mid Devon can support this through either allocating sites in the local plan for Build to Rent and/or supporting institutional investment on public land, including exploring the use of joint ventures.



Turner Rise, Tiverton



Fill out our survey online or request a paper copy. Make sure you let us know what you think!

## Question 10

**Do you think that Plan Mid Devon should explore allocating sites in the local plan for Build to Rent homes?  
(Yes / No / Not sure - please provide your reasons)**

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)

### First Homes

6.14 In accordance with recent changes to government policy, Plan Mid Devon will need to provide a positive policy basis to support the delivery of First Homes. First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing, where the discount remains in perpetuity via restrictions on the property title, and it falls within the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sales units which:

- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
- b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;
- c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and
- d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale price must be at a price no higher than £250,000.

6.15 The Government has made clear that First Homes are the preferred discounted market tenure and should account for **at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations**. This is an important consideration that will need to be factored into the evidence base for the Plan.

6.16 Planning Practice Guidance clarifies who would be eligible to purchase a First Home. In summary the eligibility requirements are as follows:

- A purchaser should be a first-time buyer
- Purchasers should have a combined annual household income not exceeding £80,000
- Purchasers should have a mortgage or home purchase plan to fund a minimum of 50% of the discounted purchase price

6.17 Plan Mid Devon will need to consider whether to apply any additional eligibility criteria in addition to the national criteria described above. This could involve lower income caps, a local connection test, or criteria based on employment status. The Plan will also have discretion to require a higher minimum discount of either 40% or 50% if it can be demonstrated that there is a need for this, and development will remain viable.



Fill out our survey online or request a paper copy. Make sure you let us know what you think!

## Question 11

**Do you think that the new Local Plan should introduce additional eligibility criteria in addition to the national criteria referred to above?**

**(Yes / No / Not sure - please provide your reasons)**

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



### Housing for older persons and people with disabilities

6.18 The proportion of people over 60 is likely to increase significantly over the next 20 years. Mid Devon’s ageing population will give rise to the need for proposals for elderly person’s accommodation including sheltered accommodation, care homes and nursing homes. In general terms, care and support needs increase with age. However, more people are staying in their properties longer with support and care being provided by external agents in their home. The current Local Housing Needs Assessment indicates that approximately 7% of Mid Devon’s population were limited a lot in their day to day activities and 17% were limited a little in their day to day activities due to a long term health problem or disability. Furthermore, it is estimated that approximately 20.3% of households in Mid Devon include a member with a disability<sup>13</sup>.

6.19 Given that future demographic changes will inevitably result in greater demands for housing suitable for older people and those with disabilities, there is a clear need for the inclusion of policies for accessible and adaptable housing.

6.20 The Council is currently in the process of preparing a new Local Housing Needs Assessment which will provide an up to date position of the latest housing needs for older people and people with disabilities.

If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)

## Question 12

**Do you think that Plan Mid Devon should set minimum requirements for accessible and adaptable housing?**

**(Yes / No / Not sure - please provide your reasons)**



Home adaptation - access ramp for Mid Devon resident



Fill out our survey online or request a paper copy. Make sure you let us know what you think!

6.21 In addition, in order to meet the diverse needs of older people, there will be a need for provide a range of different types of specialist housing. This may include:

- Age-restricted general market housing – generally for people aged over 55 and over and the active elderly.
- Retirement living or sheltered housing – this usually consists of purpose built flats or bungalows with limited communal facilities.
- Extra care housing or housing-with-care – this usually consists of purpose built flats or bungalows with a medium to high level of care available. There are often extensive communal areas such as space to socialise or a well-being centre.
- Residential care homes and nursing homes – These have individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care meeting all activities of daily life.

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)

## Question 13

**Which types of specialist housing do you think we need more of and why?**

### Senior co-housing

6.22 Finally, there may be some opportunities for senior co-housing communities. These are created and run by residents based on the intention to live with a group of people of a similar age. The sites often consist of self-contained private homes as well as shared community space. Plan Mid Devon can plan for senior co-housing communities as part its wider activities in promoting custom and self-build, as there are a number of examples throughout the country where communities will be looking to build the development themselves. This provides an excellent opportunity for communities to actively plan and shape the development and ensure it fully meets their needs.

## Question 14

**Do you think that there is any demand for senior co-housing communities in Mid Devon and is this something we should be planning positively for? (Yes / No / Not sure - please provide your reasons)**



Fill out our survey online or request a paper copy. Make sure you let us know what you think!

## Housing Diversification

6.23 Diversifying the housing market is a key aspect of the Government’s housing policy. Mid Devon has long supported diversification of housing supply in order to provide a wider range of alternative housing solutions and to boost the number of small-to-medium (SME) housebuilders and providers who deliver them.

6.24 The Government is also committed to increasing the number of self and custom build homes in the country and to establish it as a mainstream option for people to choose to get on the housing ladder or when moving home. The Government has recently announced a number of initiatives as part of a Self and Custom Build Action Plan. This sets out a number of interventions to support the sector to grow including better access to mortgage finance through a new ‘Help to Build’ scheme in order to deliver low deposit mortgages and improve the affordability of home ownership.

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)



6.25 Currently, only 8% of new homes are built this way in the UK, but this form of housing is growing in popularity. The Council recognises the benefits of custom and self-build in meeting the housing needs of Mid Devon residents. Custom and self-build is also more likely to draw upon local tradespeople and supplies, supporting the local economy. The Council is particularly keen to support custom and self-build in Mid Devon District Council.

6.26 A legal definition of custom and self-build is contained within the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) although it is essentially a home built to the plans or specifications decided by the occupant. This has the potential to encourage greater innovation in sustainable and ‘eco-friendly’ design and construction practices.



Self build property - Graven Hill, Bicester





6.27 We know that there is strong demand for this type of housing in Mid Devon. There are currently 72 entries on the Council’s Register, although secondary demand sources indicate that the actual demand is significantly higher. The Council has also prepared a longer term strategic demand assessment. This identifies that there is a demand for approximately 44 custom and self-build plots per year and 4 intermediate affordable custom and self-build plots per annum.

6.28 The Council has a legal duty to grant sufficient permissions for custom and self-build plots to meet a demand equivalent to the number of plots within a given ‘base period’ (12 month period from each October). One of the key measures within the current local plan is a percentage policy which secures 5% on sites of 20 dwellings or more as custom and self-build. There is an opportunity within Plan Mid Devon to take forward this policy again, as well as considering custom and self-build as part of the plan’s broader housing mix policies, and potentially, dedicated custom and self-build allocations.

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)

## Question 15

**In addition to requiring a percentage as custom and self-build on larger sites, what else can the Council do to support custom and self-build in Mid Devon?**

## Question 16

**What types of custom and self-build would you like to see more of in Mid Devon?**

### Community Led Housing and Co-housing

6.29 Community led housing is housing that has been built or brought back into use by local people where:

- Open and meaningful community participation and consents take place through the process.
- The community group or organisation owns, manages or stewards the homes in whichever way they decide to.
- The housing development is of true benefit for the local community, a specific group of people (an intentional community), or both. These benefits should also be legally protected in perpetuity.

6.30 There are a number of different types of community led housing including co-housing, community land trusts (CLTs), community self-build, development trusts, housing co-operatives and self-help housing<sup>14</sup>.





6.31 Co-housing is essentially people coming together to build a neighbourhood that embodies particular values. It is characterised by the need to provide a balance between privacy and community, making interactions as easy as possible, residents as the decision makers based on consensus, and communities are inclusive, part of the wider community and offer opportunities for more sustainable living. The Council is working in its capacity as a 'housing enabler' to support community groups look for opportunities to bring forward potential sites for affordable housing need to meet local needs.

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)

## Question 17

### What can Plan Mid Devon do to support community-led, co-housing and custom and self-build projects?

#### Modern Methods of Construction

6.32 The Council recognises that Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) can provide a wide range of benefits including faster construction, higher environmental standards and reduced costs compared to traditional building techniques. It is considered that MMC can help diversify the housing offered across Mid Devon, aiding affordability and sustainable design. The Town and Country Planning Association outlines a number of the benefits and challenges associated with MMC as follows:

##### Benefits:

- Speed of delivery
- Amenity during construction
- Build cost
- Build quality
- Environmental Performance
- Sustainability

##### Challenges:

- Evidence of durability
- Procurement
- Integrating planning and MMC

6.33 Modern Methods of Construction encompasses a wide range of construction techniques, all of which differ from 'traditional' building methods. This approach offers opportunities to incorporate circular economy principles by designing for the whole life-cycle of buildings, reducing waste by enabling disassembly and reuse of modular components and materials. Research undertaken by the National House Building Council (NHBC) Foundation defines MMC as including the following approaches



Fill out our survey online or request a paper copy. Make sure you let us know what you think!

- Volumetric (modular) manufactured units
- Pods (particularly bathroom and kitchen)
- Panelised systems (including open and closed panel timber frame systems, open and closed panel steel frame panels, structural insulated panels (SIPS), cross-laminated timber (CLT))
- Sub-assemblies and components (including door sets, timber I-beams, prefabricated chimneys, prefabricated dormers, floor cassettes, roof cassettes)
- Site-based MMC (including thin-joint masonry and insulated structural framework (ICF)).

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)

6.34 Plan Mid Devon offers significant potential to support a wide range of MMC and their implementation and this is supported in the Council's corporate plan. The Council is keen to build upon the work that is already progressing in this area, not least the Council's plans to build 14 social housing, zero carbon, modular homes in Cullompton and Tiverton. The nature of these homes means the onsite construction time is minimal and the houses are delivered complete, resulting in little disruption to neighbouring properties and allowing the residents to move in immediately.

## Question 18

**Do you think that Plan Mid Devon should include a policy to support Modern Methods of Construction? (Yes / No / Not sure - please provide your comments)**

## Question 19

**What do you think we can do to raise awareness and understanding of MMC and realise the opportunities for MMC in Mid Devon? (Please provide your comments)**



Modular homes on display in Cullompton



## One Planet Development

6.35 One of the 6 top priorities we have identified for Plan Mid Devon is ‘protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment, and respecting environmental limits’. Given Mid Devon is a predominantly rural district this can present an opportunity to identify appropriate innovative, sustainable and pragmatic solutions to help meet our housing needs. One option could be to introduce a move towards ‘One Planet Living’. This innovative planning policy has been highly successful in Wales and is now being promoted in a number of Local Plans across England. There are currently around 48 individual smallholdings operating under One Planet Development Practice Guidance or similar guidelines in Wales<sup>15</sup>.

6.36 One Planet Developments are defined as ‘development that through its low impact either enhances or does not significantly diminish environmental quality’. The Welsh Government’s One Planet Development Practice Guidance indicates this might take the form of a single dwelling, land based enterprise, small group of dwellings, small planned community or eco-village larger planned community. Such developments are subject to very strict requirements to demonstrate that the development will be low impact (i.e. carbon neutral in construction and use, growing a high proportion of own food, generating own power and dealing with waste and have a land-based business that meets minimum financial needs) which can include robust evidence in the form of a management plan. A management plan could be used to set out the objectives of the proposal, timescale for the development of the site and timescale for review, and also as the basis of a legal agreement relating to the occupation of the site. The management plan might cover the following areas<sup>16</sup>:

- **Business and Improvement Plan** – to identify whether there is a need to live on the site and establish the level of the inhabitants’ requirements in terms of income, food energy and waste assimilation that can be obtained directly from the site.
- **Ecological footprint analysis of the development** – to provide a notional figure for the land area required to support an individual, family or a community in terms of food, resources, energy, waste assimilation, and greenhouse gases mitigation.
- **Carbon analysis of the development** – to demonstrate that the development will achieve zero carbon status in terms of the construction and use of the development.
- **Biodiversity and landscape assessment** – a baseline assessment of biodiversity and landscape character should be undertaken and a management plan to enhance the features of importance prepared.
- **Community impact assessment** – to identify potential impacts on the host community (both positive and negative) and provide a basis to identify and implement any mitigation measures that may be necessary.
- **Transport assessment and travel plan** – to identify the transport needs of the inhabitants and propose sustainable travel solutions.



Fill out our survey online or request a paper copy. Make sure you let us know what you think!

6.37 There is also a need to carefully monitor One Planet Developments and the cumulative impact of these developments over time. Nevertheless, it provides a potential solution to addressing the many challenges currently facing rural areas and we would like to find out what you think about bringing this opportunity to Mid Devon.

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)

## Question 20

**Do you think that Mid Devon should introduce a ‘One Planet Development’ policy that would provide scope for modest scale low impact, land based developments in the countryside, subject to strict requirements? (Yes / No / Not sure - please provide your comments)**

### Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

6.38 National Planning Policy makes clear the requirement for local authorities to assess the need for traveller sites and to plan for these in a sustainable manner over a reasonable timescale. It is in this context of national planning policy and legal duties placed through the Public Sector Equality Duty that local authorities have a responsibility to develop fair and effective strategies to meet the housing needs of travellers through the identification of land for sites.

6.39 The current Local Plan includes provision for 25 new pitches for Gypsies and Travellers as part of major housing developments on the edge of Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton and planning permission has recently been granted for 5 of these pitches on land at Pedlerspool, Crediton. These locations are considered the most sustainable for new sites, although the Local Plan allows for other sites in suitable locations elsewhere in Mid Devon, which can include sites in rural or semi-rural settings. National planning policy for travellers’ sites provides scope for a rural exception site policy to enable small sites to be used specifically for affordable travellers’ sites in rural communities that would not normally be used for traveller sites and where there is a lack of affordable land to meet local traveller needs. A rural exceptions site for travellers should be maintained for travellers in perpetuity and address the needs of the local community (such as current residents or who have an existing family or employment connection).

6.40 The Council is in the process of preparing a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), which will identify future housing needs for the travelling community (including travelling showpeople). This can include permanent residential sites, the need for transit sites (sites intended for short term use and with a maximum period of stay) and also the need for emergency / negotiated stopping places. The new GTAA will be used to help inform the preparation of Plan Mid Devon. The preparation of the new Local Plan provides an opportunity to identify new sites for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation as part of larger developments at the main towns or in suitable sustainable rural or semi-rural locations elsewhere in the district, together with policy for windfall sites to come forward in suitable locations in the district. Where new sites are provided in larger developments or in off-site locations Plan Mid Devon can set out requirements for how and when they will be delivered.





6.41 Travelling showpeople have their own requirements for sites ('yards') to provide homes and also to accommodate vehicles and equipment. Plan Mid Devon could also seek to identify sites for travelling showpeople in the district.

6.42 The Council works proactively with landowners, developers, registered providers and the travelling community to identify and bring forwards opportunities in the district that can help secure the delivery of new sites and pitches to provide homes for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The Council also runs a forum for Gypsies and Travellers in Mid Devon which provides an opportunity to discuss the provision of pitches in the district, welfare needs and other matters of interest to the traveling community.

6.43 The Council also maintains a waiting list for Gypsy and Traveller households to register their need for a pitch in Mid Devon. Although there is no public travellers site or pitches that are currently available in Mid Devon the waiting list can be used to help keep the Council better informed of current need and also in developing a policy for the future allocation of pitches once these become available on sites allocated in Local Plans.

Scan our QR code to access our online survey or visit [middevon.gov.uk](http://middevon.gov.uk)



If you require a printed version of our questions please call **01884 255255** or email us at [planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:planmiddevon@middevon.gov.uk)

## Question 21

**Please tell us where you think Plan Mid Devon should prioritise new permanent sites to provide homes for Gypsies and Travellers?**

- Identify sites at the three main towns – Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton (Yes/No)
- Identify sites outside the main towns at rural and semi-rural locations (Yes/No)
- Include a policy for rural exceptions sites to meet local traveller needs (Yes/No)



## Question 22

**Are you aware of a site that you think may be suitable to provide homes and Gypsies and Travellers, a transit site or emergency / negotiated stopping place, or a yard for Travelling Show People?**

**(Yes / No - if yes, please tell us where the site is and which use you think it might be most suitable for)**



## Improving the housing market, reusing developed land and optimising housing densities

6.44 To give the best prospect that the new homes we need are provided in the right places and at the right time we need to make sure the new Local Plan includes a choice of locations and sites for that development to be able to take place. There are a number of issues that stem from this which will need to be considered through the preparation of Plan Mid Devon.

6.45 The Government's white paper 'Fixing our broken housing market' (2017) sets out plans to boost the supply of new homes in England and includes measures to build homes faster and diversify the housing market. Measures to help improve the supply of new homes are also included in the National Planning Policy Framework. These include a requirement for plans to identify land to accommodate at least 10% of the housing requirement on sites no larger than 1 hectare. Having more small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the area's housing requirement. They can be developed more quickly, since they may have fewer constraints and require less supporting infrastructure. They can help provide a greater choice of available homes and can also support local builders in a market which is dominated by a small number of national developers. National Planning Policy also makes clear the need for the effective use of land, such as making as much use as possible of land that has previously been developed ('brownfield' land).

6.46 The Council has recently undertaken a 'call for sites' to find out where land is available across the district for potential development. Where land has been brought to our attention this will be assessed over the coming months to understand its suitability for development and how capable it is of being brought forward. The Council has also undertaken an 'Urban Capacity Study' to look at potential opportunities for reusing brownfield land in the main towns and maintains a brownfield register. Plan Mid Devon will need to include policies to optimise the use of land through the use of a range of density standards for new housing in town centres and other parts of the district, which can be in relation to the level of accessibility by public transport and achieving high quality design. All of this work will be used to help inform the options for site allocations in the new Local Plan.



