

Community-Led Housing Grants

Supporting local needs housing

Shropshire Council has long been recognised for its innovative policies for affordable housing such as the “Build Your Own Affordable Home” scheme that has been so successful in helping local people build a house in their community as an exception to normal planning rules.

The Council also helps whole communities to make their places more sustainable and resilient by providing a direct and beneficial link between local choices about development and community well-being.

We are doing this through planning policies that enable communities to take control of their own futures. By designating their village as a Community Hub or Cluster, parishes are able to ‘opt-in’ to sharing in the economic benefits brought by open market housing development. By accepting development in this way, the Community is able to directly benefit from their share of the monies paid through the Community Infrastructure Levy which over time will enable the delivery of wider community benefits and projects.

The Council's assistance for Community-Led Housing extends this level of innovation and has been designed to further assist local communities in Shropshire to help themselves - even in areas that have ‘opted-out’ of mainstream open market housing development.

What is Community-Led Housing?

Community-led housing aims to inspire communities of all shapes and sizes to commission their own affordable homes to provide for local needs in the parish or group of parishes. Shropshire Council recognises that this may be an ambition for some and has responded with a series of initiatives to help enable Parish Councils and groups such as Community Land Trusts to develop homes that communities want and need.



What financial assistance is available?

Shropshire Council is now providing two types of financial assistance:

1. The Providers Grant to landlords providing new Community-Led housing;
2. The Parish Grant to Parish Councils who actively support and participate in the process of helping shape such schemes from conception to completion.

Why do you provide financial support?

The Council is acutely aware of the additional project costs that providers of affordable housing may experience when partnering on Community-Led schemes. Developing schemes in a genuinely collaborative and engaging way is simply more time consuming than more traditional developer led approaches. In addition, rural schemes generally cost more to deliver than urban ones.

Financial assistance is therefore available for schemes demonstrating true Community-Led credentials.

What is the Community-Led Housing Providers Grant?

A flat-rate grant of £10,000 paid to the landlord for each affordable dwelling completed as part of a properly constituted Community-Led scheme from 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2014. This is paid in part as recognition of the additional costs referred to above and also to help promote a genuine partnership approach on Community-Led ventures between the Community and participating housing providers.

Who can get the Providers' Grant?

The grant will be payable to eligible providers such as properly constituted Housing Associations, Cooperatives and Land Trusts working with Shropshire Council. In assessing applications for the Grant the Housing Enabling Officers will be looking for thorough and long-lasting community involvement. We are seeking consensus schemes where possible as well as innovation and fresh thinking around active community input and long term community stewardship.

When is it paid?

The Shropshire Community-Led Housing Providers Grant will normally be payable in two tranches - 60% at Commencement and 40% upon Practical Completion of the project.

Where has this worked before?

A successful similar local example is the Bishops Castle & District Community Land Trust, the first of its kind to deliver community-led housing in the West Midlands.

What is the Community-Led Housing Parish Grant?

A flat-rate grant of £3,000 paid to the Parish Council for each affordable dwelling completed in their area as part of a properly constituted Community-Led scheme from 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2014. As an additional benefit, the new affordable housing provided through this initiative will be available for local people to occupy.

The grant is paid in recognition that affordable housing is exempt from payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy. As a consequence, there would ordinarily be no financial "reward" for communities developing Community-Led Housing.

The Council has therefore introduced a new grant (financed from its New Homes Bonus) to provide some reward to these communities for promoting and actively engaging with "Community-Led" affordable housing schemes in their area.

Who can get the Parish Grant?

To qualify for the fund, the Parish Council will need to demonstrate to the Housing Enablers that they are proactively engaged with the project, have exercised their role in community leadership and are committed to the long term stewardship of the affordable dwellings. Simply confirming acceptance of a planning application made with no involvement by the community will be insufficient evidence.

However, in recognition that this is a new way of working, a little more flexibility will be shown by the Housing Enablers during 2012/13 with a demonstrably more significant role being anticipated thereafter.

When is the Parish Grant paid?

The Parish Grant is paid to the qualifying Parish Council upon completion of the new affordable homes. It will be available for spend on local projects in exactly the same way that the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund would otherwise apply.

Where has it worked before?

Several communities in Shropshire are already actively involved in Community-Led Housing. The community in Neenton village and the Onibury Parish Council are currently working on such ventures in partnership with Shropshire Council and the Shropshire Housing Group. As part of Shropshire Council's new Community-Led housing programme we hope to see the emergence of a new Shropshire wide (indeed Marches wide) Community Land Trust umbrella body aimed at providing support for such schemes from conception to completion.

Who do I contact?

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