



GRCC Rural Housing Enabler: Support for Communities

The GRCC Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) provides independent support to Parish/Town Councils, assists them by conducting Housing Needs Surveys and exploring possible sites. The RHE also provides general awareness raising around the need for affordable housing.

In general terms the process is as follows although the order and detail will vary according to circumstances:

- Parish/ Town Council (P/TC) is interested in undertaking a housing needs survey (reasons can be varied- e.g. reactive- influencing current or potential planning applications, housing association/ other landowner offers a site; proactive- encouraging new development).
- Introductory meeting between GRCC's RHE and the P/TC [to explore relevant housing issues for the local community, the RHE's role, general process for support, details of carrying out the housing needs survey (including distribution, collection, analysis of questionnaires and costs involved), relevant planning policies]. Provision of additional guides/ reading materials for the P/TC as appropriate.

If parish/town council decides to go ahead with the housing needs survey:

- Letter of agreement between the GRCC RHE and the P/TC to outline responsibilities and payment for recoverable costs (i.e. costs for printing and distribution/postage which are recovered from the P/TC)
- Survey development by the GRCC RHE and agreed with P/T Council
- Survey distribution and publicity (decisions needed about form of survey, distribution method and volunteer input as appropriate)
- Survey collation and report composition by GRCC RHE
- Draft report presented by GRCC RHE to P/T C for approval (includes survey results plus desktop research data analysis)
- Final report production. This can be shared with District/ Borough Council and/or Housing Association at this point or earlier, dependent on circumstances.
- Summary report available for local residents and others through parish/ town newsletters and websites.

If housing need is identified:

- RHE and P/T Council explore possible sites through e.g. walk around, requests for possible sites to local landowners (communications with local planners and housing associations as appropriate)
- If possible sites are identified, the local council planners become more involved. A Housing Association may be brought in as appropriate or there other means of achieving the build will be explored (e.g. Community Land Trust).
- GRCC's RHE involvement may continue throughout these processes- e.g. support to P/TCs through public consultation and publicity stages.

The GRCC RHE post is funded by Gloucestershire district councils and by Registered Providers of Affordable Housing (Housing Associations)

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