

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

Cross Cutting Discussion Forum 24.07.2012



What, Why, How, When?

Housing in Alnwick and Denwick

What?	Why?	How?	When?
<p>1. Understanding housing need and demand – including catering for specific needs – young people and elderly. Homelessness is becoming a serious issue amongst young people particularly. The current housing market is not meeting needs. What is going to be the effect of Benefit reforms</p>	<p>1. Without meeting needs people will be forced to leave Alnwick and look elsewhere for housing. This is most likely to be young and working age groups increasing the skew towards an older population. The population projections indicate the older elderly will increase at an alarming rate in the period to 2030.</p> <p>We also need to provide for open market demand as failure to do that will put more pressure on existing stock from retirees and other in-migrants making it less accessible for local population Existing housing models and delivery are not responding to specific needs for example from young people, the elderly and disabled. There is a need for the plan to really make its mark by innovative approaches to produce working housing models</p>	<p>1&2 Agree a level of supply that will meet identified needs and is sustainable in terms of Alnwick socio-economic and environmental context. Core Strategy suggests we follow population growth trends for the area but rather than follow the previous distribution that Alnwick receives slightly more than its pro-rata share in order to ensure more housing is delivered where there is access to services and to encourage employment growth in the same location. Consider a policy response in the plan that requires a mix of size and tenure types and specific proposals that will deliver particular developments in response to identified needs. There is going to be a growing need for housing for private rent as owner occupation becomes less and less attractive in the light of pension changes,</p>	<p>1&2 The plan must identify sufficient land immediately for the first 5 years up to 2016 that is deliverable and developable. Thereafter we are suggesting that the plan looks ahead c a further 9-10 years to identify a resilient long term supply that is achievable. Because of the time it will take to develop new and innovative models of delivery we also need to start now with firm proposals for special developments that will tackle specific group's needs.</p>



<p>2. Providing an adequate supply of housing – including getting the balance right and ensuring choice of housing – types size and tenure</p>	<p>for these groups</p> <p>2. We need to ensure that we get the housing supply right for a number of reasons – too little and the problems above arise – too much and the development of Alnwick is unlikely to be sustainable. Too much could simply result in Alnwick becoming a dormitory settlement for Tyneside. Housing growth needs to be supported by jobs growth and by right level of service provision.</p> <p>We need to ensure there is choice – no point in going simply for what will sell easily on the open market – mainly larger family housing at upper end of the market – there needs to be a mix of sizes, types and tenures. Social rented family housing for example is in seriously short supply.</p>	<p>economic inactivity or under-activity etc. The plan also needs an undertaking that housing needs are kept under review.</p>
---	---	--



3. Delivering affordability – viability of schemes is leading to problems in delivery

3. Prices of average housing exceed household incomes by a factor of about 10:1. If we do nothing it is the young and lower income groups that will be forced away leaving Alnwick with a legacy problem. The operation of the housing market alone will not resolve this without planning intervention. We need to view affordable housing as an integral part of the market not as currently - an add on.

3. Establish a robust basis for requiring affordable provision that is flexible in terms of development viability. Strong support in group for establishing a tariff system on all housing developments as well as a threshold approach for larger sites where open market housing can cross subsidise affordable housing. NCC are to begin charging full council tax on second homes and channelling funds to affordable housing delivery. In the context of significantly reduced public sector grant - again plan will have to look for innovative ways to deliver significant affordable housing provision.

3. Affordability issues are an on-going problem and needs to be tackled with immediate effect. The recession has not resulted in any marked reduction of prices, nor has it encouraged construction and it has also made it harder for people to afford housing. So the need for affordable housing is as urgent as ever.

4. Delivering quality in housing design and local distinctiveness

4. Given the landscape and heritage quality of Alnwick if housing is going to be successfully incorporated into the town we have to address the quality of design and local distinctiveness. Not just appearance but design as

4. There could be a policy requirement regarding housing to be assessed against CABE Building for Life criteria etc. before it can be submitted for approval. Could also develop design principles that seek designs that capture

4&5 Are possibly less urgent issues for action and in any event improving design standards are likely to be a longer term objective.



5. Making more effective use of existing stock – there is a major problem in Alnwick of empty homes

a whole – Building for Life / Lifetime Homes etc. This has to be achieved in a way that remains affordable.

5. The existing housing stock is in some respects under-occupied by the occupying households – sometimes deliberately left vacant – a major problem in Alnwick - in some respects the stock is in need of refurbishment – in some respects it is poorly insulated, compounding issues of fuel poverty. If we can tackle some of these problems we can ensure the existing stock more effectively can assist in meeting needs.

what is distinctive about Alnwick. They must be robust policies that are enforced.

5. Ensuring a good supply and choice of housing will encourage occupier's currently under-occupying large family housing to downsize to occupy space more effectively. Innovative housing models for example attractive to the elderly for safer independent living may encourage downsizing. Encouraging owners to make underused or vacant property particularly in the town centre available to a trust for refurbishment and rental. Use of cPO powers to bring vacant stock back into use.



Touring the Tables – Further Comments on Housing in Alnwick and Denwick

- **Need to explore whether ARCH the new investment arm of Northumberland CC could assist in investing in housing and the economy in Alnwick through the plan**
 - **Need to prepare a renewables strategy for new and old housing to try and tackle issues of fuel poverty**
 - **The former Willis site should be used for housing rather than further retail or employment land**
 - **Additional points and a preference system in the County's Homefinder system should be awarded for young people who reside with parents.**
-



Environment in Alnwick and Denwick

What?	Why?	How?	When?
1.Waste, Litter / chewing gum, Recycling – not taken seriously, Dog Fouling is off-putting, devaluing the area	All. Reduce carbon emissions Sustainability and resilience for the town and its population Improved visual appearance of town for residents and visitors Enhanced experience of the town for residents / visitors Nicer / healthier place to live Green economy – job creation Enhance respect for local area through less litter, more green space etc.	1. Increase bins / litter picks / education Increase scope of door-step collections Awareness-raising through education and campaigns, community ownership responsibility	All. No Timescales Identified
	2.Renewable Energy	2. Presumption for installation of PV in conservation areas	



3. Sustainable Construction.
Ageing housing stock / stone
buildings - hard to heat

Solar Panels – more priority

Community CHP plants

Community owned renewables

Incentives for community energy schemes that local people can invest in / benefit from

3. Reduce carbon emissions and eradicate fuel poverty – reduce energy bills

Building control v sustainable construction – misfit?

Incorporate more drainage solutions

Making the most of Green Deal opportunities but also adding to this as it isn't going to resolve all fuel poverty issues. Are there economic constraints?

Incorporate more tree planting

4. Sustainable Transport

4. Cycle routes around town and



5. Biodiversity

to connect with local areas

Pedestrian priority

Traffic calming – 20mph speed limits in residential areas

Green corridors and routes to connect key areas of the town for pedestrians and cyclists – e.g. new school routed via green links across town

5. Create nature reserves – small pockets of land all over Alnwick and Denwick

Maintenance policies / diverse and sustainable planting schemes

6. Green Space. Currently well below national standards in all types

6. Increase areas of designated, accessible green space that you can walk to.

Plant more trees – both street and garden

Change approach to open space grass cutting / incentives for



	meadows / wildflowers etc.
	More community planting / ownership / maintenance
7. Sustainable Food	7. More allocation of space for affordable allotments and more sustainable planting / food growing Emphasis on agriculture in local economy / land use – more resilience in local food production
	More local food retailing and availability
8. Flood Risk	8. Mitigate surface water flooding by restricting the areas approved for new build and allocating at risk areas for green space / nature reserves
	Increased drainage and maintenance of existing drains
9. Visual appearance / landscape	9. Clean streets More trees and sustainable planting



Touring the Tables – Further Comments on Environment in Alnwick and Denwick

- **Design competition for Alnwick open space network open to amateurs and professionals**
 - **Maintenance and increasing provision of drainage**
 - **Combined heat and power options / community ownership of renewables**
 - **Increase scope of recycling – e.g. types of plastic**
 - **Promoting retailing of locally produced food (don't forget fish)**
 - **Shared communal spaces**
 - **Tackle fuel poverty through energy-efficiency policy – Green Deal needs to tackle fuel poverty**
 - **Dog wardens / dog mess – warden and council intimidated**
 - **More structured litter sweeps – Town Council led**
 - **Education - involvement of young people in environmental possibilities**
 - **SITA Contracts – expansion of recycling options**
-



- Remove litter bins – take litter home – cultural change

Community Facilities and Education in Alnwick and Denwick

What?	Why?	How?	When?
<p>1. Community Facilities</p> <p>Lots of open space but lack of access to it.</p> <p>Drop-In Centres for older people.</p> <p>Expectations of what a rural area provides for the community.</p> <p>Integration of Council Services. Cost of using community facilities.</p> <p>Recognition of the Town’s “caring” element – it’s a place</p>	<p>1. Community Facilities</p> <p>Loyalty to the area.</p> <p>Try to keep a mix of population.</p> <p>Ownership of the locality</p> <p>Maintain the Community</p> <p>Feeling part of the place</p>	<p>1. Community Facilities</p> <p>Welcome packs – matching interests of people with activities/volunteering opportunities/organisations.</p> <p>Create a culture of Localism</p> <p>Funding – raising the A & D Precepts, professional fundraiser for the Town.</p> <p>Develop allotment spaces – need for more.</p>	<p>1. Community Facilities, no timescale identified</p>



where people care.		Community barter/sharing schemes.	
Ways of working for assimilation esp. of people new to the area.	Keeping the community well informed.	Welcome packs – matching interests of people with activities/volunteering opportunities/organisations.	
Corn Exchange Building?		Who are the Landowner's/Property owners?	
2nd Home owners.			
2. Education	2. Education	2. Education	2. Education, no timescale identified.
Location of new School Campus.	New school campus will affect other aspects of the area – Transport, Retail, Community Facilities, Environment.	Further/higher education providers to develop high level skills in the areas where they are needed.	
Facilities for Adult Education/In-Formal Education.	To mitigate the impact of a new location for a school campus.	Apprenticeships in rural crafts. More in-formal education providers.	
Access and encourage Skills Training – high level skills training in Tourism.	Loss of skills and knowledge in rural crafts. Not everyone is academic.	Encourage more volunteering.	

Need for skills in these areas.

Touring the Tables – Further Comments on Community Facilities and Education in Alnwick and Denwick

- **No further comments to record**
-



Economy and Employment in Alnwick and Denwick

What?	Why?	How?	When?
<p>1. The role of Alnwick as a service centre should be widened to serve North Northumberland</p>	<p>1. A strong economy is critical to attracting people to live in the town and to create opportunity for residents</p>	<p>All. Town centre improvements/streetscape/market place, possibly delivered through C.I.L</p>	<p>All. The need is for early action and an early response</p> <p>All. The growth plan should be made known to NCC</p>
<p>2. Key sectors are seen as High Tec, Research and Development, Service Sector, Tourism. Other potential may be in green industries, local foods</p>	<p>2. The town needs to rise to the challenge of change and to attract new investment</p>	<p>Linking the town centre to key growth areas south of the town will strengthen the town overall</p>	
<p>3. The need to encourage new employment streams is also necessary to offset public sector job losses in the town</p>	<p>3. A vibrant economy is key to a balanced population, particularly attracting young and economically active</p> <p>It is important to balance employment sectors – for example tourism may be widely beneficial but may also be</p>	<p>Transport, new housing, and (all age) education are critical to provide a joined-up approach to economic growth</p> <p>The towns growth target should be in the order of 12,000 population to sustain and grow services, attract investment and maintain its</p>	



seasonal and have lower pay

role as a main service centre for the wider area
Providing the right sites in the right locations

Disincentives to growth should be targeted – parking, infrastructure improvements, traffic flow, the quality of service sector offer

The town centre needs to be more outward looking – the achievements of Morpeth centre as an example

Improved infrastructure, broadband, and provision of suitable premises is important

The need to upgrade the A1 should be supported in the plan



Touring the Tables – Further Comments on Economy and Employment in Alnwick and Denwick

- **Support for new business development particularly to encourage young people to consider self-employment**
 - **The town centre suffers from charity shops due to their reduced business rates and rent incentives**
 - **The town's future economy should be balanced**
 - **Heritage culture and tourism should remain important sectors**
 - **Town centre improvements should include the pedestrianisation of Narrowgate to make the centre more attractive**
 - **Parking improvement is important**
 - **Housing and Economic priorities are linked and must be considered as a whole. What type of housing and what type of employment?**
 - **Consideration should be given to 20mph zones throughout the town**
 - **Employment and training should match local requirements**
-



Heritage and Culture in Alnwick and Denwick

What?	Why?	How?	When?
1. Build on Strengths – Books/Railways/Music/Language/Food, etc.	1. Town could reach its true potential	1. Make more of our great ‘people’ resources (schools, volunteers)	
2. Quality Townscapes	2. (‘Our face is our fortune!’) Make Alnwick/Denwick attractive to by-passing traffic	2. Implement the Civic Society’s Streetscape Plan	
3. Need a heritage-positive attitude in the Plan	3. Heritage and Culture is about people and families and not just built environment	3. Concentrate investment centrally as well as those uses that draw people in	
4. Need to emphasize more of the Historical	4. Our ‘way of life’ here is important		
5. Better recognise the valuable role of Parish/Town Council			
6. Too many young people have no			



structure for their spare time

7. We need to be clearer on what our 'culture' is and make it more accessible

7. People and 'gossip' as well as ancestry research are all vital, including war memories and our own local 'language'

8. The Market Place is extremely important as the 'heart of Alnwick/Denwick

9. Current transport links siphon people into the Castle and Garden and away from the town: although this does reduce vehicle congestion in the town

9. We still need 'a level playing-field' of equal promotion of town/Castle/Garden and equal pedestrian access

10. Car parking needs to be arranged and timed to encourage visitors to stay in the town, as short-stay parking means just this

10. Could a 'Park and Ride' scheme help? Alnwick too small to support this but walking routes from car parks need to be well signed to the centre and short in length

11. Sunday and Monday evenings (i.e. at the beginning of the 'tourist week') are very dead in the centre

11. Giving a poor first impression to the visitor

12. We need to develop a better 'night-time' economy with more evening

12. Walks, concerts, music (like the Torch festival events) – and



outdoor activities in the summer

more indoor and outdoor events/activities in Autumn/Winter to extend the visitor season

13. We need to extend walking tours

13. An Alwick/Denwick guild of volunteer guides

14. Northumberland Tourism and other such tourist agencies need to promote the town of Alwick as strongly as the Castle and Garden promote themselves

14. Another 'level playing field' which sees Alwick/Denwick as a uniformly handsome Resort Town studded with special attractions

15. We need a more in depth review of what attractions we have to offer

15. To engage and involve visitors

15. 'Cinderella' Christian Heritage of churches and historic places like St Michaels' Church, St Paul's Church, Malcolm's Cross, Alwick's Chantry House, etc. and the many other places of interest we could offer: trails are a well-tried way of packaging them for visitors (and locals too!)

16. We need better coverage and promotion of the area through all

16. More and more people choose and plan their holidays

**media**

via the web for example

17. More festivals/events to demonstrate and promote our cultural strengths

17. Our considerable musical heritage, our literature heritage (Barter), our Medieval warrior heritage (Hotspur School of defence)

18. Consider Alnwick as a centre for Ancestry Tourism

18. Bellingham's Heritage Centre in its old railway station also has local ancestry information on offer to visitors

19. Make the most of up-and-coming attractions

19. Aln Valley Railway

20. Playhouse and Museum rely on outside funding but also need different demographics

20. Need to attract a larger and more varied audience

20. Reduce the currently high percentage of concessionary tickets - to improve box office takings



Touring the Tables – Further Comments on Heritage and Culture in Alnwick and Denwick

- **‘Make the road signs on the A1 like those in Scotland which reassure visitors they can easily divert and then resume their journey.’**
- **‘Campaign for volunteers to take action with improving some buildings e.g. Northumberland Hall.’**
- **‘Investigate HOW other historic towns do it in UK??’)**

GENERAL:

(Post-its:

- ‘Promote the heritage/history of the town – more guided walks either with leaflets or people.’**
- ‘General marketing and branding of the town using the historic setting and agreed key items that define the town in the 21st century.’)**



Sport and Recreation in Alnwick and Denwick

What?	Why?	How?	When?
1. Lack of Youth Facilities e.g. Bike Track and Skate Park.	1. Problems of anti-social behaviour and vandalism	1. Improve provision in the Town (Community Infrastructure)	1. Project plan for 1-15yrs identifying priorities.
2. Play Area Quality and Management Poor	2. Unattractive for Businesses and Tourists	2. Set standards and maintain, rationalise small areas at south end of the town and look for new site and source funding.	2. Within 2 years
3. Playing Pitch Quality Poor (Greensfield)	3. High costs for Sports Clubs e.g. Hockey club travel to Morpeth	3. Deliver the approved planning application for Greensfield playing pitches	3. Within 3 years
4. Mixed Quality of existing Green Spaces. – Alnwick well below national standards for community open space. Also important to Retain existing green spaces and need to	4. Loss of Amenity Space	4. Seek funding to make improvements.	4. 3-5 years

provide and improve cycleways

Touring the Tables – Further Comments on Sport and Recreation in Alnwick and Denwick

- **No further comments to record**
-



Transport in Alnwick and Denwick

What?	Why?	How?	When?
1. Pedestrian links	1. Providing safe and attractive opportunities for all to walk within the limit of their ability	1. Funding should be diverted from vehicle highway maintenance to ensure that all footpaths are made safe	1. A strategic plan for footpath upgrading is required for completion in 3 to 5 years
2 Cycle links: The design of cycle lanes is often an unsafe token gesture, e.g. from the A1 access road to the Lionheart and Cawledge Business Parks.	2. Provision for and promotion of cycling for all	2. A plan for designing and providing safe through-routes for cyclists is essential.	
3 Bus services: The bus station is a key transport hub but it fails completely to meet current standards	3. Provision and access for public buses, community transport, private hire coaches and other vehicles	3. A radical upgrade is required to help provide access to the town	
4 Goods and Freight	4. Supporting access, delivery and distribution of goods and services		



<p>5 Market Place: The cobbled surfaces add positively to the character but parking has a negative impact</p>	<p>5. Improving the functionality, viability and vitality</p>	<p>5. Initiative needed to attract small businesses, possibly providing daily market facilities</p>
<p>6 Transport Links & Accessibility</p>	<p>6. Seek continually to improve sustainable links to the world around Alnwick and Denwick</p>	<p>6. The Aln Valley Railway needs to reach the town, initially using a vintage bus service.</p>
<p>7 Environmental concerns: The Conservation Area is unique but access needs to be improved to bring facilities up to date</p>	<p>7. Enhancing the environment to improve the quality of life for all</p>	<p>Bus links within the town are needed</p>
<p>8 Maintenance & Upkeep</p>	<p>8. Keeping transport infrastructure in a safe and attractive condition</p>	
<p>9 Traffic management: Many of the current systems do not work, road markings are intrusive</p>	<p>9. Managing traffic for the benefit of all, with priority for pedestrians</p>	<p>9. Radical review is needed to devise less intrusive systems that bring people into the town and give real meaning to the 'shared space' concept</p>

**10 Parking**

10. Provision, management and prevention of abuse

10. Extend sensitively the successful resident only permit scheme in Prudhoe Street etc. to the whole of the town centre and core shopping area

Improve the signs to car parks, including those areas that are free and not reserved for residents

Rationalise the charges but clamp down on infringements

Manage the permitted use more selectively, varying availability and length of stay appropriately across the day and across the week.

11 Planning potential

11. Using the planning process to help improve transport and travel now and in future

11. Use the Neighbourhood Plan to encourage Northumberland Estates to contribute more to the town



Touring the Tables – Further Comments on Transport in Alnwick and Denwick

- **Pedestrian links**
Use an able bodied person to test ride a mobility vehicle on footpaths all round the town.
 - **Market Place**
Use as a community hub to provide services without travel.
Facilitate access from the villages around such as Seahouses, Felton and Rothbury.
 - **Traffic management**
Provide more routes for safe cycling both on roads and traffic free routes.
 - **Parking**
If the town centre offers what people want, they will walk from the car parks.
There is an apparent conflict between safety and heritage in that the Bondgate Within car park cobbles are unsafe for the elderly.
-



Retail and Tourism in Alnwick and Denwick

What?	Why?	How?	When?
1. 'Branding of Alnwick' – presenting Alnwick experience as a whole, not piecemeal	1. To attract and retain visitors	1. Comprehensive maps and signage – 'zoning of the town'	
	Making Alnwick's offer better known to locals/hinterland as well as tourists	Better transfers of visitors between attractions (rather than hanging on to them)	
	What Alnwick has to offer (in totality) is not perceived as 'relevant' so they go elsewhere	'Interpretation' of the town – retail, leisure and heritage	
	Does not yet feel like a Market Town	Limited budget means need maximise use of PR and social media/viral marketing	
	The 'whole' has the potential to be greater than the sum of the parts (Castle/Gardens/Market Town/attractions/accommodation, etc.)	Marketing Alnwick as a complete destination	



	Alnwick as a stop-off from A1 for those travelling North & South	<p>Mobile phone apps (like Amble)</p> <p>Sunday opening</p> <p>Better use of Market Place</p> <p>Better offer of local products</p> <p>Lesson to be learned from those who do it well both in UK and on continent</p> <p>Streetscape (Civic Society report)</p>
2. What is right balance between Town Centre and out of town centre development (including retail)?	<p>2. Limited space in Town Centre</p> <p>NCC study suggests need for some additional capacity (esp comparison retail) for Alnwick to maintain market share/competitiveness</p> <p>Economic development/jobs</p>	<p>2. Ensure local voice in planning decisions</p> <p>A planning framework that says we don't want more out of town centre retail...but support the qualitative improvement of retail offering in the town – independent, right product mix, retail chains who will add value/appeal</p> <p>Vitally important to sustain/support/encourage a</p>



		good variety of shops – spot gaps in the market
	<p>What/who are the drivers behind expansion? Is it those who own the development sites? [Strong views expressed that a) more out of town centre retail development would damage Town Centre trade b) arguments favouring expansion of retail needed to be tested – should Alnwick follow the same model as everyone else c) risk that jobs created on fringes of town will displace employment in Town Centre</p>	<p>Ensure that planning decisions include both qualitative (character of town) as well as quantitative (financial) criteria</p>
<p>3. Improving the accessibility and usability of the Town Centre for local residents & visitors (esp car parking)</p>	<p>3. Residents and visitors perceive the Town centre as difficult to access by car – both through Town Centre and parking</p>	<p>3. Better signposting of parking from out of town (like Newcastle) Signage and interpretation to get motorists into Centre</p>
	<p>Parking charges are unfair across the county</p>	<p>Different parking offers – short stay, medium/long; parking for those working in Alnwick</p>
	<p>Out of town centre offers</p>	<p>Increase capacity (either</p>



	abundant parking	Roxborough or Greenwell)
	Poor signposting and direction	Ensure parking is available where people want to be (e.g. poor parking for Narrowgate)
		‘Interpreting’ the town for those approaching it by car – viz Civic Society Streetscape study [little enthusiasm for Park & Ride]
4. Improving the quality of roads/pathways around Alnwick	4. Difficult town to navigate with a wheelchair/buggy/mobility scooter	4. ACT’s ‘Quality Street’ mark
	Some cobbles/pavements unsafe	Not in favour of blanket pedestrianisation, but improving priority for pedestrians in Town Centre
	Poorly repaired roads	
	Accumulation of litter/cigarette butts in some streets	Each retailer taking responsibility for the front of their premises
		‘Pester power’ – inform council/ councillors of deficiencies



Touring the Tables – Further Comments on Retail and Tourism in Alnwick and Denwick

- Provide services where customers need them
 - Make more of coastal links (Alnmouth, etc.) and of Aln Valley railway in the future
 - Develop and invest the Market Place as a focus for the town
 - Community buy-up of vacant shops to ensure that they are kept for local businesses
 - Partially covered Market Place for year round use
 - Festival and Events are a vital part of the visitor offer – but under threat due to economic squeeze
 - Quality of accommodation/restaurants needs improvement
-
- Is there not a risk that retail chains will be the first to withdraw when the going gets tough?
 - Need for planning guidelines which stop unsightly development which ruins Alnwick's appeal
 - Develop out of town centre for commercial premises and 'trade retail' (builders merchants, etc.) not compete with Town Centre
 - New school site will create changed pattern of demand for convenience retail; this should be planned for
 - There is no good service stop on A1 travelling North from Newcastle. What sort of opportunity might this present – e.g. House of Bruar style offering
-
- Town Centre should be pedestrianised at either end of the market place
 - Lack of 'green' around streets – not enough quality planting/trees
-
- Cobbles/pavements very dangerous – some beyond reasonable remedy
 - Poor quality surfaces in Wynds and passageways away from Market Place
-



Concluding Discussion Session - Facilitator – Chris Anderson – Plangle

Discussion Points

- The need for affordable homes can be in conflict with tourism aspirations where smaller housing units are acquired as second and holiday homes.
 - The community right to build powers could be used to deliver affordable housing. There was also support for a tariff approach so that each housing development even if only for one house contributed to affordable housing funding.
 - Concern was expressed that there was currently vacant affordable housing in Alnwick raising the question have we got it wrong in terms of what is affordable.
 - Generally agreed there was a need for more social rented stock
 - Private rented housing sector was important in Alnwick and growing sector to get round the problem of affordability.
 - A return to Right-to-Buy will lead to additional loss of social rented stock. Whilst this is not unduly problematic if money is re-invested in the housing stock it is unlikely that this will result in a compensating supply of new homes for all the stock lost
-



-
- If retail and tourism is going to attract people to the town small scale improvement works need to be carried out and maintained.
 - There is a need for plan to respond to community aspirations and deliver quality of place
 - Need for development proposals to be linked by green corridors.
 - We need to find a community ownership model to retain the green space we have and what we develop in the future.
 - The plan needs to deliver actions and it must be for the community to drive the plan not the process. As such neighbourhood plan needs to be creative in its approach.
 - There is an opportunity for the neighbourhood plan to look at new ways of governance e.g. small scale works being done by the County council to be taken by the Parish Council under the community right to challenge.
-