

*Response to questions in housing chapter of issues and options paper*

**Question 8 - How many new homes should we plan for each year?** Which option do you think we should take?

**Option 1 - plan for an average of at least 928 new homes being built each year** – This would accommodate levels of house building that accord with current Government requirements. It may mean, however, that we fall a long way short of meeting all affordable housing needs.

**Option 2 - plan for a greater number of homes, for example 1,200** – this may meet more of the affordable housing need but not all of it.

**Option 3 - Plan to build considerably more homes each year** - A figure of 1,614 homes would align with Governments previous thinking and would potentially result in all affordable housing needs being met.

**Option 4** – Please tick this box if you think none of the above are appropriate

Please provide any further comments and justification in the box below, especially if you think a different number of new homes being built each year is appropriate.

**Tick one box only**

Option 4 - none of the above.

Where do these targets come from? They appear arbitrary. The ORS report<sup>1</sup> identified a local assessed housing need of 15,143 dwellings over the 20 year period (757 p.a.). Although the standard government methodology gives a figure of housing need at 18,000 ( 900 p.a.), this includes 1677 dwellings to meet an increase in net in-migration over past levels. We challenge the need to meet this higher figure, given that it provides for increased in-migration. We understand that local authorities can challenge the requirement to plan for the government-assessed figure if there are local constraints of land availability, as there clearly are in East Devon much of which is covered by AONBs.

The ORS report also makes it clear that 70% of housing built in the district in the previous plan period is occupied by in-migrants, predominantly from neighbouring districts, in particular Exeter. It is clear therefore that this new build is not contributing to meeting **local** needs.

Furthermore, it is disingenuous to claim that lower overall targets mean that we fall a long way short of meeting affordable housing needs. In setting overall housing targets, preserving the environment should take priority over meeting affordable housing needs. The latter needs to be addressed via other policies (such as occupancy conditions on new developments, a higher rate of council tax on second homes, vacant property and holiday lets, and public investment in social housing), not overall housing targets.

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<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/papers/strategicplanning/201020bpitem9afinalhousingneedsineastdevonappendix%201orsaug2020.pdf>