

Stisted Parish Council: Rural Affordable Housing FAQ

1. What is the current status of the housing project?

The Parish Council is currently in the "evidence-gathering" phase. We have completed a [Housing Needs Survey \(2024\)](#) with the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) and have formed an [Affordable Housing Working Group](#) (AHWG) made up of councillors and residents to explore potential sites. **No final decisions or site selections have been made.**

2. Is the survey a "mandate" to build?

No. We have received questions regarding whether Question 10 of the survey acts as a mandate. We wish to clarify:

- **Welfare Recognition:** The Housing Needs Survey (HNS) is used strictly to **recognise that a welfare need exists** within our community. It helps us understand the scale of local residents' housing difficulties. The HNS informs the Parish Council when taking a decision to investigate further the provision of a scheme for Affordable Rural Housing
- **Community Choice:** Any future proposal would still require formal site selection, a parish-wide consultation and, planning applications.

3. Why do we need more affordable housing?

Our village remains expensive, often forcing local people to move away. We only have to look at the success of the **Upper Salters** development (completed approximately 12 years ago) to see the ongoing demand. That scheme was oversubscribed by people with strong roots in Stisted, including:

- **Young People:** Local residents born and bred here wanting their first independent home.
- **Families & Schools:** Single parents needing to stay local so their children can remain at **Stisted Primary School**.
- **Special Needs:** Providing stable, local housing for residents with special educational needs.
- **First-Time Buyers:** Helping young people onto the ladder via "share to buy" (Shared Ownership), and over time;
- **Older Residents:** To satisfy a need to move into smaller and more affordable homes thus, retaining their long-standing family, social and, emotional bonds within the Parish

4. How do we know these homes will be for "local" people?

The project would be a [Rural Exception Site](#). This is a legal designation that ensures:

- **Local Connection Only:** Homes are prioritised for those with a proven link to the parish (e.g., currently living here, working here, or having immediate family here).
- **Affordable Forever:** They can **never be sold on the open market** or used as holiday lets. Legal agreements (Section 106) ensure they remain affordable for future generations of Stisted residents in perpetuity.

5. Who pays for the development?

It will **not** cost the Parish Council or local taxpayers anything to build. Funding typically comes from central government grants and the housing association (such as Hastoe).

6. Where can I find more information?

The Parish Council is committed to total transparency. All reports, including the **Site Preference Survey Report (Nov 2025)** and previous meeting minutes, are available on the [Stisted Parish Council website](#).