

HARAH

Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing

HARAH Draft Communication Strategy

Purpose

The purpose of the HARAH Communication strategy is:

- To promote the provision of affordable rural housing to parish councils, district councillors, rural communities and people in housing need
- To encourage landowners to offer sites for rural housing
- To engage with all the bodies and individuals involved with rural affordable housing provision to improve the supply
- To use the HARAH partnership to influence local, regional and national debate about rural affordable housing

Vision

The HARAH vision is

To ensure that communities are sustainable and inclusive by enabling an increase in the supply of affordable housing to meet local needs.

Communications Plan

Audience	<p>One or more of the following groups – Parish Councils, District Councillors, Rural communities, People in housing need, Community planning groups, Planners, Regional and National bodies, Landowners</p> <p>Priority: People in housing need, Rural communities and Parish Councils</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Parish Councils to engage with HARAHA to develop rural housing, • More engagement with households in housing need and more potential recipients of affordable housing. • Less objections through better informed local communities. More community plans to consider affordable housing need and provision, • More sites to be offered by Landowners, • Planners to become more engaged in the early stages of development, • HARAHA to influence local, regional and national policy to increase rural affordable housing provision • Raise profile of HARAHA through information, education • Increase awareness and understanding of affordable housing • Provide resources to further develop and run the HARAHA partnership
Interest/ Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local people in housing need are housed • Parish Councils help meet the housing needs of parishioners • Other benefits for the community e.g. sports provision • Affordable housing supports the long term social, economic and environmental sustainability of the community • District Councillors help meet strategic housing responsibility as well as needs of ward residents • Landowners receive payment for land and fulfil philanthropic purpose

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planners help meet strategic responsibility of their Authority • Support regional and national delivery objectives
Core Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural housing is for local people, people who are part of the local community. Many are disadvantaged households and need to maintain the informal support networks within their community • All local households who can't afford a home are eligible – let them know how to apply/register their need • Importance of affordable housing in helping to support sustainable and diverse communities • Other benefits housing can bring – sports facilities, open space provision, support for current facilities e.g. school • Need for rural housing for local people in most if not all villages, even small villages • Require good (but not necessarily perfect) sites on edge of village • Affordable housing will not spoil the village as it will be carefully designed and built to high building and environmental standards and it will not reduce the value of people's homes • Provides support for the local economy, supports sustainable and vibrant communities
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposition from people in the village, often those who have moved there relatively recently, and particularly people neighbouring the site • Sometimes opposition from the Parish Council • Engage with wider community especially those in housing need and get them to express their views • Encourage people in need to register for housing • Concern about the housing spoiling the look of the village • Mis-conceptions about the number of houses to be built • Assumptions about the 'sort of people' who will live in the houses • Concern that the homes will not be allocated to real local people • Concerns that the housing will create more traffic and more pressure on infrastructure • Assertions that the village is not sustainable as it has no/few facilities and therefore houses should not be built there • Planners may oppose sites if they do not meet their criteria • Securing planning permission • Regional resources to ensure homes are affordable

Extract of Business Plan

Objective	Action: How delivered	Outcome	When	Lead officer	Supported by	Audience	Means of Communication
Advocate cross party support for the delivery of rural affordable housing	Show DVD and other HARAHA information to all rural ward members across the HARAHA area	Increased councillor support for rural housing schemes	2009	HARAHA Members	LA Officers	District Councillors	Use of DVD, newsletter
Increase effectiveness of parish council and community engagement	Produce a communications strategy by April 2009 Send DVD to all parish councils by end April 09. Follow up by June 09 Put the starter pack on the website and circulate to HARAHA officers by end June 2009 Identify community champions for each scheme Expand the range of communications methods to reach a wide range of people e.g. use of forums, interactive website Use informal networks and marketing to keep people aware of HARAHA; make links to other websites such as rural schools, local employers etc; make links with support workers working in rural areas and local Care groups Link website to Homesin Hants	Fewer general objections for rural housing schemes by parish councils and rural communities More engagement with households in housing need and more potential recipients of housing	2009/10	Debbie Rhodes Bukola George Debbie Rhodes Local Authority officers ??	HARAHA officers, Hyde marketing team (Claire Adam), Communications group (Debbie Rhodes, Lucy Buis, Ashley Grist, Steve Lincoln, Julie Eden)	Parish Councils and rural communities	website/news letter/DVD/starter pack

Objective	Action: How delivered	Outcome	When	Lead officer	Supported by	Audience	Means of Communication
Encourage landowners to bring sites forward	Use the website to ask for new land offers from landowners Make contact with large landowners e.g, Country Landowners and Businesses, Large estate owners Report back by Jan 2010	More offers of land by landowners	2009/10	Peter Bennett	Communications Group, RHEs	Landowners	Advert in local press News piece on website Targeted contacts with large landowners
Bring forward council and other publicly funded land	Seek corporate support for release of public land. Report back on how many are given planning permission	More publicly owned land brought forward for rural housing	On-going Annual Review meeting	Peter Bennett	Local Authorities, HCC	Councils and other public bodies	Advert in local press
Use evidence of impact surveys and scheme reviews to inform strategy	Develop a framework to use for impact surveys to cover cost, value, additional features, quality, design and scheme integration as well as satisfaction. August 2009 Hyde to undertake impact surveys 12 months after site completion and feedback to HARA H	Business Plan to address issues raised in impact surveys	2010/11 Annual Review meetings	RHEs? Chris Buchan-Hepburn	LAs, Communications Group,	Parish Councils, community, local and regional bodies	Business Plan
Use evidence from parish plans to feed into policy in co-ordinated way across HARA H	Encourage all LAs to support links between affordable housing and community planning Co-ordinate the approach to parish plans and feedback to HARA H Complete, implement and monitor the Starter pack to give clear understanding and direction to parish councils about rural	HARA H policies reflect evidence from community planning	2009/10	Steve Lincoln	Communications Group, Community Teams in Local Authorities	Policy planners, Housing Development	Guidance notes, Starter pack

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	affordable housing from the early stages						
Encourage site identification in parish plans	Sample questions to be included in plans Ask for help to find site, not whether a scheme should be progressed	More sites identified through community plans	2009/10	Steve Lincoln	Community Planning officers	Rural communities, parish councils	Guidance notes, starter pack
Sell success of HARA schemes, particularly in meeting local need and helping to maintain sustainable and diverse communities	Review the HARA website and update by August 2009 Make the website interactive for use in contacting households in need by March 2010 Ask parishes to put a link on their websites Publish a regular HARA newsletter and send out Press releases Use Parish Tours to celebrate success	Increased positive profile of HARA	On-going	CAH Debbie Rhodes Fiona Hood	Julia Potter, others	Parish Councils, District Councillors, rural communities	Website, parish tours, press releases
Increase awareness of rural affordable housing issues	Draft simple guide in plain English (Starter pack) by May 2009 Promote role of RHEs through publications Include national and regional documents on website Arrange parish tour in each District, all to be completed by end 2009 and annually	More schemes, fewer objections	2009/10 Annual Review meeting	Fiona Hood Debbie Rhodes Local Authorities	Communications Group	Parish Councils, District Councillors, rural communities	Starter pack, website,
Progress housing schemes through the agreed process where there is evidence of need	Share information across partnership and reconcile differing views on progressing schemes Amend 10 stage guide to reflect this by July 2009	More schemes achieve planning permission	2009/10	Debbie Rhodes/	Communications Group	Planning, Housing	Project plans, meetings

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Increase awareness of the importance of design and sustainable construction	Share learning points from Ropley MMC/Energy efficiency report by March 2010 Encourage parish councils to use Village Design Statements to express important design features in their parish	Improve design and sustainable features of construction	2009/10	Chris Buchan-Hepburn LAs	Communications Group Communications Group	Planning, Housing, HydeMartlet	Reports and Research
Feedback on HARAHA issues to planners	Ask for HARAHA issues to be discussed at planning officers groups (HIPOG, Development Plans Group) as appropriate	Increased awareness of HARAHA by planners	On-going	Louise Evans		Planning Officers	Meetings, briefings
Hold an annual stakeholder conference	Consider holding a drop in event for parish councils and other community groups such as the WI.	Increased profile of HARAHA	Autumn, Annually	Debbie Rhodes	John Lancaster, Javed Ditta, Chris Buchan-Hepburn	Stakeholders	Conference