

POLICY PENN4: SMALLER HOUSING

A. Wherever practicable and commercially-viable, development proposals for three or more houses should address identified housing needs and deliver a mix of housing types to include 1,2 and 3-bedroom dwellings whilst maintaining the character of the locality and neighbouring properties as defined by the Penn Parish Design Guidance and Codes.

5.26 This policy is to allow individuals, and smaller households to remain in the neighbourhood where they live, or wish to downsize from a larger property.

5.27 The Housing Needs Assessment carried out as part of the Neighbourhood Plan identifies the need for a higher proportion of smaller homes and the earlier survey responses endorsed this need. There are many larger residences but the large/small balance needs adjustment to meet the needs of local people.

5.28 The provision of a focus of smaller dwellings (greater than 50% of the total) on new residential developments will help to ensure an efficient use of scarce land in the built-up areas of the main settlements in the parish. Policy PENN4 acknowledges that such an approach may not always be practicable and/or commercially-viable. The need for smaller housing in the parish is clear, and the number of elderly households is projected to increase considerably through the Plan period. The policy also acknowledges the importance of delivering smaller homes without detriment to the amenities and the character of the locality and neighbouring properties as defined by the Penn Parish Design Guidance and Codes. This requirement may result in tensions between the two issues and they will need to be resolved through the development management process on a case-by-case basis.

5.29 The provision of the policy is key in seeking to maintain a mixed and balanced demographic. Better utilisation of the existing housing stock is unlikely to occur unless smaller and mid-sized units are available either by the construction of new small and mid-sized dwellings or by the conversion of existing properties.

5.30 As set out in the 2022 Penn Housing Needs Assessment "Affordable housing" and related schemes to allow for lower income people is not identified in this policy or NP due to the local demographics and the local cost of housing which makes the concept impractical. However smaller houses financed by downsizing or supported by families is seen as sensible and viable.