

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Inquiry into the provision of affordable housing in Wales

Response from Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Thank you for the opportunity to submit views on the above. I welcome the National Assembly's continued work to improve the delivery of affordable housing.

With regard to the terms of reference the focus is predominantly outside this Authority's role as a planning authority. I would however wish to support:

- Any opportunities to increase Social Housing Grant.
- allowing Housing Authorities and Registered Social Landlords to make better use of Social Housing Grant provided, i.e., allowing lower levels of grant support to be used on individual developments. With lower levels of grant used on each individual property this could enable a greater number of affordable units to come forward overall.
- Ensuring there is a pot of money, perhaps held by WG where unforeseen windfall opportunities can be taken advantage of. For example, when asking Registered Social Landlords if they can support a scheme that is coming forward sooner than expected the current programming systems appears inflexible.
- Targeting the release of public land for affordable housing in areas of acute affordable housing need and there is limited potential for delivery. National Parks generally find themselves in this position.
- Community Land Trusts appear to take a considerable time to get off the ground given the resources required for set up. Perhaps this is an area where the Welsh Government could offer more support.

I note that the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has recently (October 2011) produced a paper 'Welsh housing policy: where next?' which sets out many ideas which could help in the debate. Perhaps it would be worth making contact with the Authors if you have not done so already? Here is a link to the report:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/welsh-housing-policy-where-next>

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