

Epping Forest District Council Representations to the Draft Local Plan Consultation 2016 (Regulation 18)

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Method	Email			
Date	12/12/2016			

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Letter or Email Response:

Comment on Epping Forest District Draft Local Plan I would like to comment on Draft Policy H2 – Affordable Housing. The high cost of housing across the district is affecting its demographics. The census and other population statistics indicate that the population is ageing. An additional factor is the exodus from London by people no longer able to afford the capital's house prices; as our district lies on the immediate perimeter of London, this exodus also pushes up local prices in our district. The average house price in Loughton is £250,000 yet the average salary in Loughton is £25,000. Policy H2 needs to reflect and attempt to resolve this issue more strongly. Parishes like Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell could, by 2033, become predominantly retirement communities if the issue is not addressed. This would require additional health and social care services and a range of other expensive and currently unplanned infrastructure. The district council can help re-balance the trend towards the greying of our towns by taking robust measures in Policy H2 to allow working-age people to buy homes in the district and, in particular, to help our district's young people, to get onto the housing ladder. Policy H2A should set a mandatory percentage of affordable housing to be built on development sites of over 10 homes. There should also be a mandatory no-reversion requirement for developers of starter homes and key worker homes. Both within the district and beyond, clawback clauses allowing the sale of the starter home to revert to the developer after a set period, have reduced the pool of affordable homes for local people. Consideration should also be given to a policy of sales of starter and/or affordable/social housing being offered first to Epping Forest residents, to enable more of our young people – the future of the district – to buy a home within the district and thus invest social capital into making Epping Forest thrive. This policy has been successfully trialled in Newham and elsewhere. Please acknowledge receipt of this e-mail Stephen Pewsey

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