



# News Release

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## South Hams Councillors Recommend Community Housing Plans

Members at South Hams District Council's Executive have recommended the allocation of £1.8 million funding to support the development of community led housing projects in the South Hams. This will be used to support existing local housing schemes and also to bring through new projects which will provide affordable homes for local residents.

In December, the Government released details of a pot of money available to authorities in areas where the housing market for local people is affected by second home ownership. The South Hams has been awarded one of the highest authority allocations and this was based largely on housing affordability and proportion of second homes in the District.

Since receiving the first half of the funds in January, it was necessary for South Hams District Council to devise a broad strategy to show how the Council intends to use money to support homes in the community.

**Cllr Hilary Bastone, Portfolio Holder for Customer First, explains:** “Approving the strategy is a step towards delivering local houses for local people in the South Hams.

“A lack of affordable housing is having a significant impact on the sustainability and vitality of local communities. We recognise this, and with the CHF providing us with welcome financial support, we can look at developing affordable housing projects which are tailored to the specific needs of each different area by working with communities across the South Hams.”

In partnership with local community groups, the Council would provide support in areas such as, obtaining suitable sites, facilitating, funding and project managing developments. This would offer support to communities in their endeavours to build sustainable, affordable housing in their areas. A portion of the funds will also go towards supporting existing and emerging local Community Land Trust housing projects.

This is one of a wide range of options needed to help get local people to get onto the property ladder, where house prices are beyond an affordable level for those on low and medium incomes.

If approved by Full Council, the Council will begin developing a community housing development programme.

Interested community housing groups and land owners can get in touch at:

[CommunityHousing@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:CommunityHousing@swdevon.gov.uk)

## **ENDS**

### **Notes for editor**

- The CHF is specifically targeted at community-led housing projects as distinct from affordable homes provided by registered providers that are eligible for alternative grant assistance.
- Community Housing is defined by a set of requirements as follows:
  - That the community must be integrally involved throughout the process in key decisions (what, where, for who). They don't necessarily have to initiate and manage the development process, or build the homes themselves, though some may do;
  - A presumption in favour of community groups that are taking a long term formal role in ownership, management or stewardship of the homes, and
  - A requirement that the benefits to the local area and/or specified community must be clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.

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