

FAO: Adrian Tofts, Strategic Planning Manager

Ref: LDP Current Consultation Sept 2016

Document: Proposed Main Modifications to the Maldon District Local Development Plan
Chapter 2: Spatial Vision and Development

Reference: 098 Policy S2: Strategic Growth

“To meet the objectively assessed housing need for the District, the Council will plan for a minimum of 4,650 dwellings between 2014 and 2029 (310 per annum) including provision for market housing, affordable housing, housing for an ageing population and other types of housing for specialist needs.”

Dear Sir

I am a supportive (but aging) householder of Maldon District’s plan but believe that the objectively assessed housing need for the District is flawed in regard to the LDP delivering specific housing for an ageing population (as per 098 Policy S2, above).

I make specific reference to the housing needs of older residents of the District and have used your own public documents as the basis of my objection. Sadly the LDP, which I believe demonstrates a real attempt to set a direction and goal to support the future needs of us all in the District, looks set to be undermined by those responsible for its execution - by not having the correct measures and accountabilities in place. Specifically defining volumes and locations for market and affordable homes for the older residents is but one example of its failure. This could of course be addressed and goals set to reflect the excellent work already done in the supporting studies of housing needs.

Regards

Richard Collins

“Compared with the 2001 Census, the 2011 Census reports the three largest percentage increases in the population of Maldon are:

- 60-64 year olds by 57.7% (1,866 additional people),
- 65-69 year olds by 45.8% (1,256 additional people) and
- 70-74 year olds by 37.8% (823 additional people).

Between 2008 and 2033 the population aged between 65 and 84 years is expected to increase by approximately 85%.

Maldon Council’s **Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014)** confirms the housing type needs for many of the District’s older people:

“The main type of accommodation that is ***preferred by older people*** when they move within the next five years is ***a bungalow*** at 62.2%.”

Within the Council’s **Older Persons Housing Strategy**, it states:

“With ***an ageing population***, the Maldon District will soon see roughly half the population ***over 55 years of age*** and the average age of the adult population who constitute the ‘housing market’ is correspondingly higher.....***responding to the housing needs of older people*** is therefore ***the major part of the local housing market***”

It further states:

“...providing the right type of housing is essential if it is to meet both the needs and aspirations of older people and contribute to the overall supply of housing in the area.”

Maldon Council’s Corporate Plan 2014-15 set out strategic goals and objectives for implementation across the Council.

This identifies priority issues for the District up to 2026. These include “Older People”.

Their Vision for the District is underpinned by **four Corporate Goals**, one of which is **“Meeting housing needs”**.

The Council states in its Corporate Plan 2014-15:

“With our strategic housing and planning policy roles we are at the heart of achieving the social, economic and **environmental objectives that shape the wider community** and create a sense of place. **Delivering the homes needed** in our local area must be underpinned by **a sound understanding** and **objectively assessed local housing needs**”.

The Council’s desired ‘High Level Outcomes’ in their Corporate Strategy include:

- A housing stock that **meets the needs** of the District;
- **Improved housing standards**;
- A **housing supply which reflects the demographics** of the District, in particular the ageing population.

They go on to state:

“Increasing the supply of affordable homes continues to be an important priority for us. Similarly **so is supporting village communities to remain sustainable**, where there is an identified need for affordable housing, particularly for a rural District such as ours.

With people living longer, we will need to work in partnership to rise to the challenge and pursue solutions to **meet this growing demand locally.**”

This strategic commitment to older people is strongly emphasized in the proposed Local Development Plan (LDP) and also within **Maldon District Planning Department’s** own 2014-15 Business Plan, stating one key activity as:

‘Meeting the housing needs of the District’.

They state the outcome to be:

‘Preparation of a strategic housing SDP, encompassing the service pledge of a Plan to meet the housing needs of older people **by adoption of an SPD specifically related to older persons housing needs...**’

This does not appear to be happening though:

By way of example: Across the District, for the period 01/04/2014 to 15/05/2015, 15 single storey bungalows were approved while 17 were lost to conversion/demolition - a net loss of 2 bungalows.

A 5-year analysis of Great Totham & Wickham Bishops planning approvals demonstrates these large villages have failed to add one extra single storey bungalow to their market housing stock - yet their populations continues to grow, and age. Failure in the making!

Summary:

1. With a publically stated, high-profile strategic focus on the housing needs of older people, itself a key element of the proposed LDP, at Corporate, Departmental and Political level, why is there is no hard reference in the LDP of the number of

bungalows to be built in order to meet the stated and quantified growing demand (and associated measurements to demonstrate compliance with said target)?

2. Why are the decisions and approvals of the Planning Committees and planning officers not supporting this important part of the stated housing strategy within the adopted (almost) LDP?

Maldon appears to be producing a statistically led LDP with outcomes and measurements that bear little relationship to the stated aims and objectives.”