

Housing Needs in Surrey Heath

Background Briefing

With this edition, we introduce a new section to the regular FOCUS newsletters. In this section we will provide some background to the underlying issues in Surrey Heath today. LibDems believe that many residents would welcome this sort of information to allow them to understand a little better what the real pressures are and what real decisions can be taken. And we think it's our job to get that information to you!

Carried out in October 2002 and published in March 2003, the Surrey Heath Housing Needs Survey aimed to provide the basis for planning housing provision up to 2011. The study drew information from a variety of sources, including the 2001 Census, the Land Registry and some 8.3% of households in the Borough who participated in the study.

The major finding of the Study was the number of "concealed households" it revealed. Some 7% of households (i.e. some 2200) contained one or more households seeking independent accommodation. 87% of these are the adult children of existing Surrey Heath residents. When income and the local housing market are examined, it can be seen that some 75% of the concealed households could not afford to buy even a small flat in Surrey Heath. Other findings were that 13% of households contain somebody with a disability, and that the over-75 population is projected to increase by 56% between 1996 and 2011. There are no current housing issues relating to asylum seekers.

Most new demand is for the smaller and affordable type of housing, particularly flats and terraced housing. However, such property is already under-represented in the local housing stock where it makes up 21% of the total, compared with the national average of 46%.

The total affordable housing need is for 640 units annually. As re-lets of existing Housing Association stock runs at 187 units annually, there is therefore a need for 453 additional units every year, a total of 4,077 mainly one and two bedroom units over the period to 2011. This level of demand greatly exceeds what is likely to be able to be delivered. This figure takes into account a slow growth in population of some 0.5% per year in the area.

A summary report of the Housing Needs Study can be obtained from Surrey Heath Borough Council, or consulted in Camberley Library.

Springfield Road Planning Application Turned Down



Exit from the proposed development onto un-made-up Springfield Road

The planning application to replace "Woodlands" and "Brampton" in Springfield Road with 2 blocks of five flats and three 4 bedroom detached houses has been turned down on the advice of Surrey Heath's Planning Officers.

The reasons for refusal were essentially that, on a number of grounds, such a development would be incompatible with the character of the area. However, the density of the development, and highway considerations were NOT cited.

Bob Smith said: *"I am pleased by this decision. Springfield Road is a quiet and attractive area. An extra 20 cars exiting onto this unadopted road would, in my opinion, have significantly impacted on the other residents, as well as put extra pressure on the junction with Prior Road. However, this is unlikely to be the last application for infill in the Springfield Road area."*