

8(I) POPULATION AND HOUSING

OVERALL AIM

8.1 The policies and proposals for housing provision have been developed in the context of the strategic Aims and Objectives set out in Chapter 4, and the overall development strategy described in Chapter 5. The key Aim is:

To provide for the housing needs of those who will live in the County, primarily in locations accessible to centres of employment and only where associated infrastructure investment is secured.

8.2 Many factors have influenced the housing policies set out in the Review. The development strategy set out in Chapter 5 establishes a broad framework for change taking into account national and regional policy, environmental constraints, economic and social issues, and the development pressures affecting each part of the County.

8.3 Past patterns of change gave some indication of current pressures and market forces and provided an indication of possible future patterns of development. Projections for population change were also considered - by assessing the implications of a range of assumptions about key variables affecting future housing need and demand.

8.4 This Review also had regard to the advice set out in the Regional Planning Guidance for the South West which had indicated a possible level of housing provision for Devon for the period 1991 to 2011. This Guidance, however, recognised the need for the levels of change suggested to be subject to a "testing" process through the preparation of the Structure Plan and this was one of the key roles of this Review.

PAST PATTERNS OF CHANGE AND CURRENT COMMITMENTS

8.5 In order to provide a context for the period up to 2011, it is helpful to be aware of the patterns of change that have occurred since 1981 - a period broadly comparable to the time scale of the Review. It is also important to recognise the level and distribution of existing commitments within the County.

8.6 Over the period 1981 to 1995 the total population of Devon increased by 92,600 people. This change, illustrated in Figure 3 represents an annual average increase of approximately 6,600 people which can wholly be attributed to a significant level of net inward migration. In the period 1981 to 1989 net inward migration averaged approximately 10,500 per annum, but in the 6 year period 1989 - 1995, this has fallen to an average of 5,200 per annum.

8.7 The overall effect of this level of net inward migration has been partially offset by a surplus of deaths over births. Devon has a population profile tending towards the more elderly age groups. Without net inward migration the population of Devon would have fallen by almost 25,000 in the period 1981 to 1995.

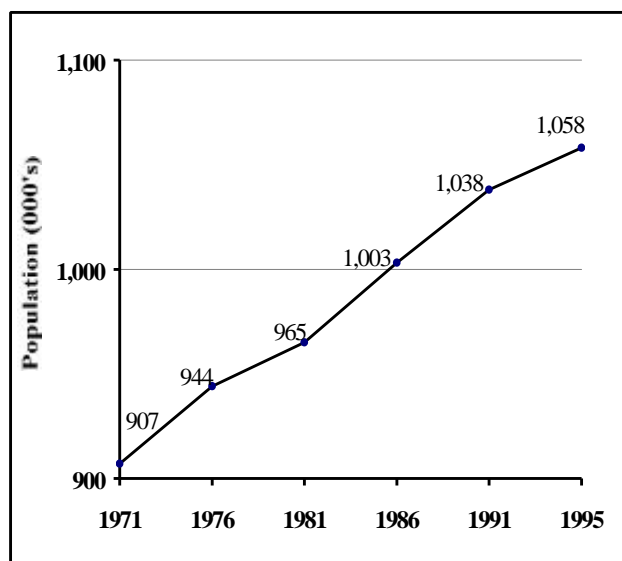


Figure 3: Population Change 1981 to 1995

8.8 The relative changes in each District, shown in Figure 4, illustrate a complex pattern of overall population increase. In some Districts, such as Exeter, Teignbridge, South Hams and Torbay, growth rates in the period 1981-95 were significantly greater than that in 1971-81, but elsewhere this pattern was reversed. In the case of Plymouth, the lower rates of growth experienced in the 1981-95 period can in part be linked to the increased growth within South Hams, a significant increase in new development there being indirectly related to a shortage of development sites available within the City boundary.

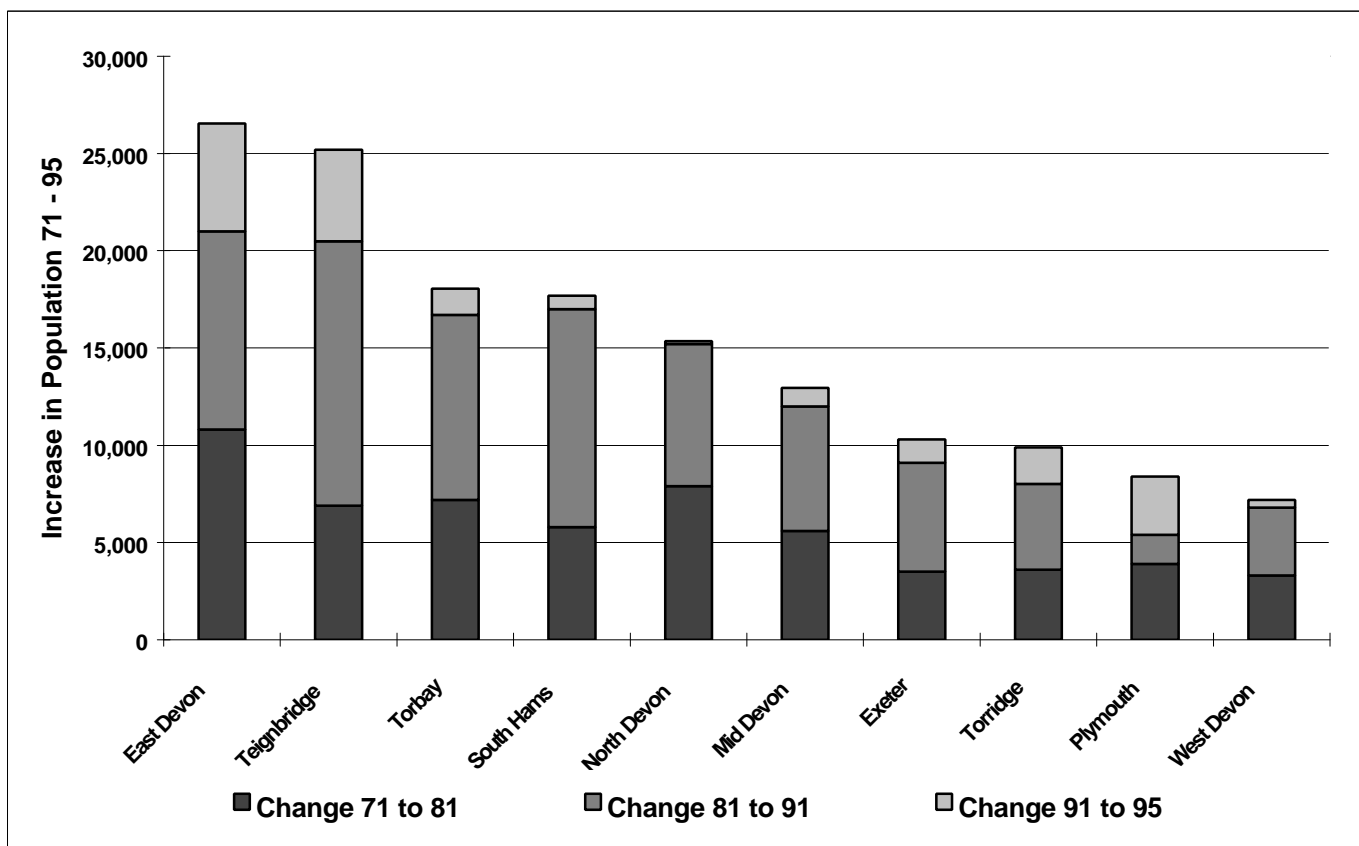


Figure 4: Population Change by District 1971 to 1995

Dwelling Completions

8.9 This growth in population has been reflected in new housing provision, and about 60,000 dwellings were built in Devon in the period 1981 to 1991 (6,000 per annum) with a further 16,000 dwellings in the period 1991 to 1995 (4,000 per annum), giving a total of 76,000 dwelling completions in Devon between 1981 and 1995. These rates of completions therefore closely reflect the patterns of net migration referred to in paragraph 8.6 above.

8.10 In most parts of the County the distribution of dwelling completions has reflected the pattern of population growth. In some of the urban areas, especially Plymouth, however the development of new dwellings was more closely related to changing household structure and dwelling need within the existing population rather than population change itself. Figure 5 illustrates the number of dwellings built in each District for the period 1991 to 1995.

Existing Commitments

8.11 The Review covers the period from 1995 to 2011 and it is important to remember that a significant number of dwellings have already been built or are committed. These commitments, in the form of planning permissions or existing local plan allocations contribute significantly to overall provision.

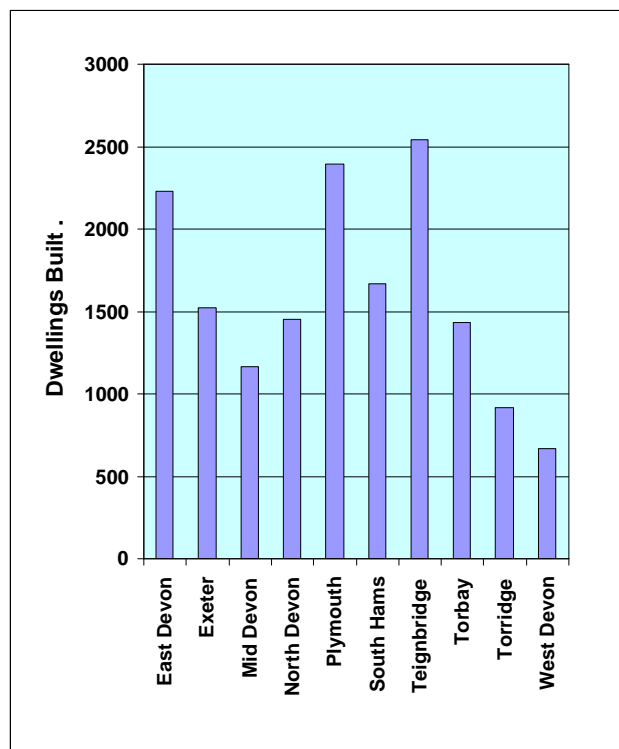


Figure 5: Dwelling Completions by District 1991 to 1995

Current Commitments

8.12 Between 1995 and 1998 a total of 12,400 dwellings have been built and as at mid 1998 an additional 30,700 dwellings are under construction, with planning permissions or are allocated in Local Plans. Table 5 sets out the overall distribution of commitments by Local Planning Authority area in Devon.

REGIONAL GUIDANCE

8.13 The 1994 Regional Guidance indicated that the provision of a total of 438,000 dwellings would "meet the Region's future housing needs over the period 1991 to 2011". This level of provision was also seen as being consistent with current Government population and household projections at that time.

8.14 In this context that Regional Guidance indicated that the provision for 4,950 dwellings per annum, or 99,000 dwellings in total, would be appropriate within Devon over the period 1991 to 2011. It stressed however the need for the figures to be fully tested in the Structure Plan. The Regional Planning Guidance stated that the figures should not be regarded as targets and that account should be taken of the most up to date Government population projections and other considerations such as environmental and economic objectives.

8.15 The Regional Guidance for the South West also added a regional dimension to the consideration of development patterns in Devon. It included general principles relating to the broad patterns of growth that should be favoured within the area. In particular, it advised that in general terms more concentrated patterns of development, those that would lead to the bulk of new development being located within the main cities and towns, would be the most consistent with Government policy and with sustainable development objectives.

8.16 In this context, it identified Plymouth, Exeter and Torbay as main urban areas within the region; areas that could therefore be considered for accommodating major growth. It recognised, however, that not all urban areas will be capable of accommodating major new development. In such cases, nearby towns may be better placed to accommodate development - and in certain circumstances new settlements may also be appropriate.

8.17 In contrast, it urged that less concentrated development patterns should be discouraged, and that new development in rural areas should be strictly controlled. Scattered settlement patterns, which are inconsistent with the aims of sustainability, should not be reinforced. It commented however that there is a need to identify those settlements most suitable to accommodate growth - especially those which act as service centres for a wider surrounding area, have good communications and a degree of local self-containment.

Dwelling Provision Proposed in the Review

8.18 Having taken full account of the current projections of demographic change and housing needs and demands, it has been concluded that the Plan should provide for a total of 75,800 dwellings in the period 1995 to 2011. This level of provision recognises the environmental, economic and social factors affecting each part of the County, the most recent trends relating to housing completions and the potential for better use to be made of the existing housing stock

Strategic Implications

8.19 The level of dwelling provision proposed in the Review can be broadly related to the strategic areas identified as part of the development strategy set out in Chapter 5. Table 3 summarises general pattern of distribution on this basis.

Strategic Area	Dwelling provision 1995 - 2011	%	Actual build 1981-1995	%
Areas of Economic Activity	42,000 (2,625 dpa)	55	39,700 (2,835 dpa)	52
Rural Diversification Areas	12,800 (800 dpa)	17	8,600 (614 dpa)	11
Rural Constraint Areas	21,000 (1,313 dpa)	28	27,900 (1,993 dpa)	37
TOTAL	75,800 (4,737 dpa)	100	76,200 (5,443 dpa)	100

Table 3: Dwelling Provision (and dwellings per annum) by Strategic Area compared with past Building Patterns.

8.20 In population terms, this level of development provision would result in an increase of about 76,000 in the period 1995 to 2011. There are also likely to be changes in the household structure within the population as set out in Table 4 - the main change in proportional terms being a significant increase in single person households.

Household type	Change 1995 - 2011
Married couple	- 1.0 %
Lone parent	+ 17 %
Single person	+ 42 %
Average household size	- 6.5 %

Table 4: Change in Household Structure in Devon - 1995 to 2011 (DoE projections)

THE DISTRIBUTION OF DWELLING PROVISION 1995 TO 2011

Level of Housing Provision

8.21 The strategic Aims and Objectives, and the overall strategy provided the basis for determining the levels of provision appropriate for each District and National Park area over the period 1995 to 2011.

8.22 Proposal H1 below sets out the overall level of provision for each area. In view of the strategic significance of the Plymouth and Exeter areas in both a Regional and Devon context, Proposal H1 also indicates that element of housing provision to be included within the Plymouth and Exeter Areas of Economic Activity - as defined in general terms on the Key Diagram. In the two National Parks dwelling provision is intended to meet the local social and economic needs of these areas only, and not to provide for general open market demand. The figures quoted are therefore not intended to lead to allocations of land in the National Park settlements but are simply an indication of what might happen during the plan period as a result of the application of Local Plan policies.

Proposal H1	
To provide for the development of about 75,800 dwellings within the period 1995 to 2011, to be distributed as follows:	
Local Planning Authority	Dwellings
East Devon	10,200
<i>Exeter Area of Economic Activity</i>	<i>3,500</i>
<i>Elsewhere</i>	<i>6,700</i>
Exeter	6,000
Mid Devon	7,200
North Devon	6,800
Plymouth	6,800
South Hams	11,500
<i>Plymouth Area of Economic Activity</i>	<i>7,200</i>
<i>Elsewhere</i>	<i>4,300</i>
Teignbridge	9,000
Torbay	6,200
Torrige	7,100
West Devon	4,100
Dartmoor National Park	800
Exmoor National Park	100
DEVON	75,800

(Note: For the application of the Review to Exmoor National Park – see notice on page i)

8.23 The level and distribution of provision set out in proposal H1 relates to the period 1995 to 2011. At the time of publication, a significant part of this provision has been completed and a substantial additional element is already provided for in existing Local Plans. Table 5 below shows

that of the total provision of 75,800 dwellings for the period 1995 to 2011, some 12,400 dwellings had been built as at April 1998 and a further 30,700 provided for through planning consents and Local Plan allocations.

8.24 The table 5 shows that as at 1998 more than half of the housing provision made within the Plan has already been built or is committed by way of existing permissions or Local Plans.

District	Provision from Proposal H1 1995 - 2011	Built 1995 to 1998	Commitments at 1998	Additional dwellings implied by Proposal H1
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
East Devon	10,200	1,700	3,300	5,200
A of E Act	3,500	100	200	3,200
Elsewhere	6,700	1,600	3,100	2,000
Exeter	6,000	1,400	2,400	2,200
Mid Devon*	7,200	1,200	3,700	2,300
North Devon*	6,800	1,300	2,900	2,600
Plymouth	6,800	1,300	2,900	2,600
South Hams*	11,500	1,200	1,700	8,600
A of E Act	7,200	500	300	6,400
Elsewhere	4,300	700	1,400	2,200
Teignbridge*	9,000	1,600	2,900	4,500
Torbay	6,200	1,300	3,400	1,500
Torrige	7,100	800	4,900	1,400
West Devon*	4,100	400	1,900	1,800
Dartmoor N. P.	800	200	600	-
Exmoor N. P.	100	-	100	-
TOTAL	75,800	12,400	30,700	32,700

* Excludes National Park. All figures rounded to nearest 100 dwellings (Commitments include: Dwellings under construction, with planning permissions and allocations in Local Plans at 1998)

Table 5: Dwellings Built and Committed at 1998 and additional provision proposed to 2011

Phasing of Strategic Housing Provision

8.25 Wherever possible, priority should be given to the use of previously developed land prior to the identification of green field sites (see Policy S3) but Local Plans will also need to ensure that the strategic dwelling provision for the period to 2011 can be effectively implemented within the period of the Plan.

8.26 In the past, market demands for housing in some parts of Devon, particularly the south and east, has significantly exceeded the provision in the Structure Plan. This has sometimes meant that strategic objectives to influence the distribution of housing have not been effective - provision within some areas being fully taken up within the early part of the Plan period. Where Proposal H1 implies a significant reduction in past rates of development. Planning Authorities should therefore consider the need for Local Plan policies to phase the development of housing land in the District as whole or in particular areas.

8.27 In developing phasing policies and in determining the extent of any proposals for greenfield sites

consideration will need to be given to the likely emergence of unidentified sites, i.e. 'windfalls' - including re-development areas and conversions. Such sites can make a significant contribution to housing provision in some areas, and these should be carefully considered, in order to avoid exceeding the plan provision.

Policy H2

Where the level of dwelling provision included in Policy H1 implies a significant reduction in building rates, Local Plans should consider the need for phasing development over the Plan period.

Settlement Hierarchy and Distribution of Residential Development

8.28 Although the Structure Plan provides the broad guidance to the distribution of future development, the potential locations will be determined through the preparation of Local Plans. The strategy set out in Chapter 5 does however establish a settlement hierarchy which has implications for the distribution of dwelling provision.

8.29 The emphasis of the overall development strategy is to promote development which is sustainable in both the short and long term. It is therefore important that new housing development is accommodated within those settlements where the objectives of sustainability are most likely to be achieved

8.30 Within the rural areas of the County there are a number of larger villages possessing varying levels of services for those who live in them and the surrounding area. The role of these settlements as providers of services to the community, and the need for their continued viability will be recognised in Local Plans through their designation as Local Centres. In the smaller villages and hamlets and in the National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty residential development should only be provided for where it would help to meet local social or economic needs and be on a scale in keeping with the size of the settlement and the rural character of the surrounding area.

Policy H3

In providing for residential development Local Plans should have regard to the role of the settlement as set out in Policies S1a, 1b, 1c, and 2 and the county-wide development strategy. In villages other than Local Centres and in all the settlements in the National Parks, provision for new residential development should only be made where it would help to meet local social or economic needs and be on a scale in keeping with the size and character of the settlement, and the rural character of the surrounding area.

(Note: For the application of the Review to Exmoor National Park – see notice on page i)

Meeting Housing Needs in the Countryside

8.31 The control of housing development in the countryside is necessary to:

- avoid developing houses in locations which are not likely to be sustainable in terms of their accessibility to jobs and services, and
- safeguard the undeveloped countryside from indiscriminate or unnecessary housing development.

8.32 In considering proposals for the conversion of existing buildings in rural areas, priority should be given to uses that promote the diversification of the economy - reflecting the emphasis set out in national policy guidance. The development and/or conversion of buildings for residential use in the countryside should be seen in this context and be considered in terms of the need to avoid the reinforcement of dispersed patterns of development. Such conversions to residential use are most likely to be appropriate where they would achieve the conservation of buildings of historic or architectural interest.

Policy H4

Residential development in the countryside will not be provided for except where:

- 1. there is a proven agricultural, forestry or horticultural need, or**
- 2. it results from the conversion of disused or redundant buildings of historic or architectural interest, provided that the conversion would achieve the conservation of those buildings and be sympathetic to the rural character of the buildings and the surrounding area and not give rise to unacceptable traffic.**

Residential densities

8.33 The type of housing to be provided for within the County is an issue primarily to be dealt with by the local planning authorities through their local plan and development control functions. The Structure Plan Authorities are concerned, however, that high standards of design and layout are maintained in meeting Devon's needs.

8.34 In general terms, new housing development should be on a scale compatible with the existing scale of development in the area. In addition to this general concern, there are two strategic issues that relate to the type of housing provision made. The first of these issues is that of providing adequate housing of the appropriate type to help meet local housing needs. The second is that of residential density.

8.35 In respect of housing types, household projections for Devon indicate that there will be significant increases in single person and lone parent households over the period 1995 to 2011. To some extent, this is likely to give rise for a need for more smaller housing units, which may enable higher densities to be achieved in some areas and Local Plans will need to recognise this pattern of need in determining how best to provide for future requirements.

8.36 It is also important to ensure that land allocated for residential development is used effectively, and that low density development, which is often of a type and price that cannot meet the needs of local people, does not predominate within the strategic dwelling allocation.

Policy H5

Residential land should be developed at the highest density compatible with the maintenance of accessibility to public open space, the creation of an attractive living environment and the characteristics of the site and its surroundings.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

8.37 Not all of Devon's population will have equal access to the housing market. Some households may find it difficult to afford to buy housing because of the high level of prevailing house prices within their locality. Other households may not have the resources to enter the open housing market. There is therefore a specific need to make provision for affordable housing. The need for this type of housing exists in both urban and rural areas.

8.38 Affordable housing encompasses both low-cost open market housing and subsidised housing available to people who cannot afford to occupy general market housing. Policy H6 highlights the strategic importance of the need to provide for affordable housing and establishes a consistent basis for the development of local plan policies throughout the County.

Policy H6

In providing for housing development in accordance with Proposal H1, Local Plans should ensure that adequate provision is made for affordable housing, based on an assessment of need.



Affordable Housing in Exeter

Provision for Gypsies

8.39 It is important to ensure that adequate provision is made for meeting the particular needs of gypsies in Devon. Local Authorities need to consider whether it is appropriate

to provide further permanent gypsy caravan sites in their area since both now have the power to do so.

Policy H8

Adequate site provision should be made in Local Plans for gypsies residing in or resorting to Devon where a clear need can be established.

8.40 Gypsy sites for long term residents have special requirements which have to be considered. These sites call for many of the same services as houses, including easy access to schools and shops, although sites wholly surrounded by houses are often unsuitable. Government advice suggests that the best compromise is generally for sites outside but not far from residential areas, and that such sites are not acceptable within National Parks.

Policy H9

In determining the suitability of sites and locations for gypsies, regard will be had in particular to the following considerations:

1. **the suitability of the site in terms of access, servicing, privacy, screening and the proximity to dwellings;**
2. **the availability of local services and facilities (e.g. shops, schools, transport, etc.); and**
3. **the impact on the locality, both visually and in terms of noise and disturbance.**