

Enabling Custom & Self Build Housing

Understanding Demand – Informing Policy

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Three Dragons
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We are going to talk about.....

- Policy based on evidence (NPPF/PPG)
- What the registers tell you
- A longer term perspective
- The Demand Model
- Demand into policy
- Early lessons

Policy based on evidence

- Pre 2012 – not on the radar
- 2012 – NPPF – “*plan for a mix of housing based onthe needs of different groups in the community (such as**people wishing to build their own homes**)*”

But then a step change

- Self-build & Custom Housebuilding Act (2015) + Housing and Planning Act (2016) + Regulations (3 duties...)
- 2018/19 – NPPF



National Planning Policy

NPPF Para 61 – (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes)

“Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to,people wishing to commission or build their own homes).

+ footnote sets out duties under the Self-build & Custom Housebuilding Act (2015)

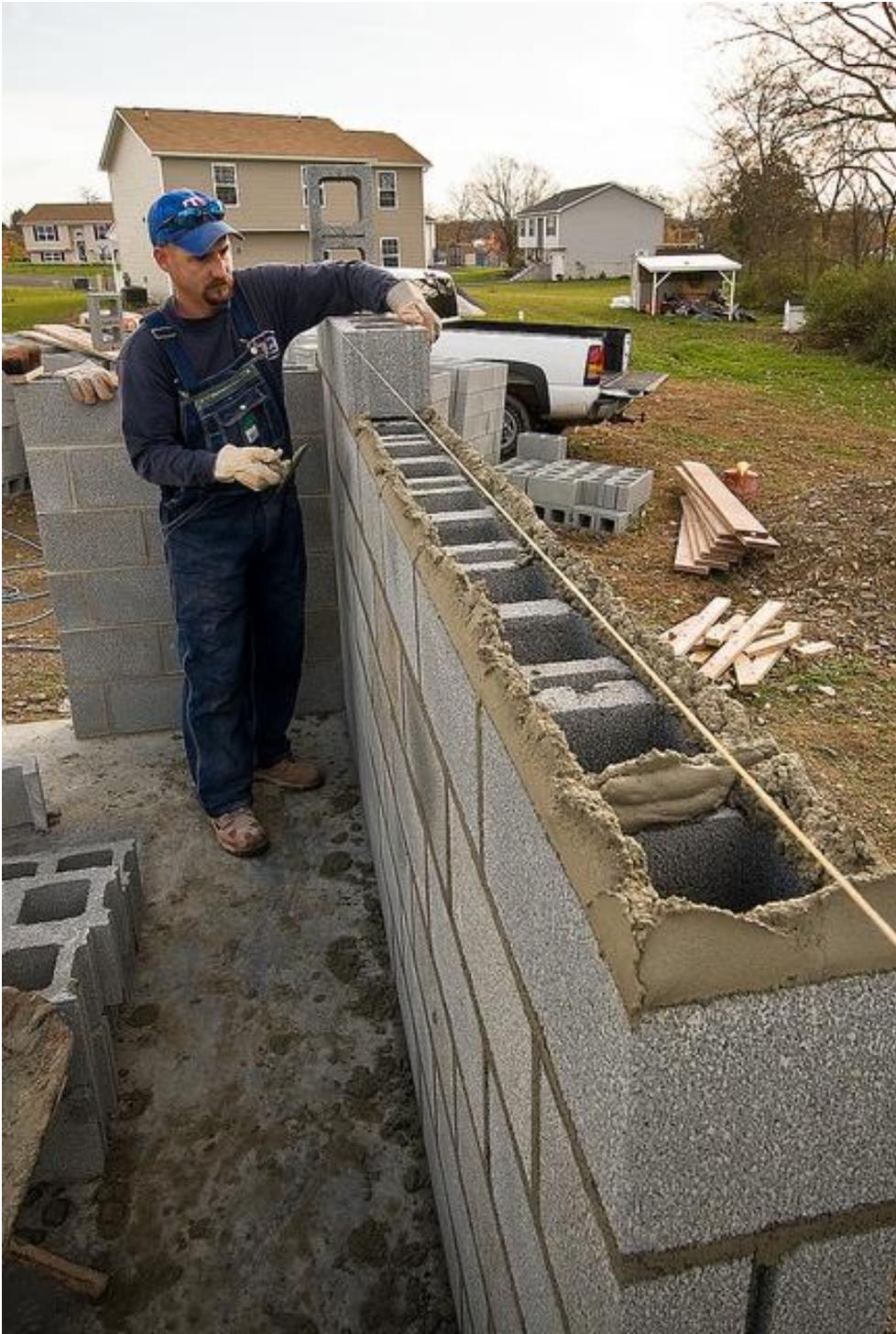
National Planning Practice Guidance

“In considering whether a home is a self-build or custom build home, relevant authorities must be satisfied that the initial owner of the home will have primary input into its final design and layout.” (para 16)

“To obtain a robust assessment of demand for this type of housing in their area, local planning authorities should assess and review the data held on registers. This assessment can be supplemented with the use of existing secondary data sources ...” (para 03)

Local authorities “must give suitable development permission to enough suitable serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area. The level of demand is established by reference to the number of entries added to an authority’s register during a base period.” (para 23)

- Not a lot to go on!
- Nothing specific about ‘low cost’ or ‘community groups’
- Waiting for more from MHCLG



Doubters and Supporters

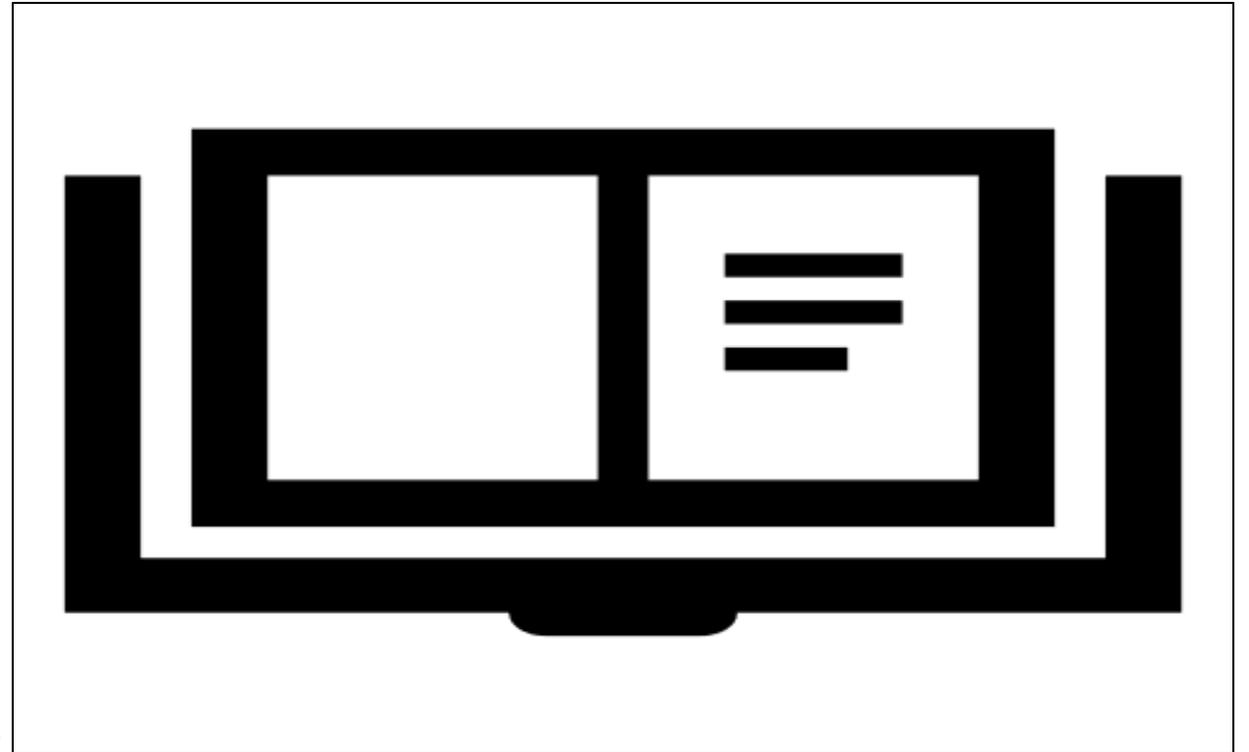
Despite the legislation - is still an emerging option –
lack of awareness

Sceptics – bit of an irritation, got enough to worry
about, self builders get in the way, design
coherence lost, adverse impact on viability

Supporters – adds variety and local distinctiveness,
encourages smaller builders, accelerates delivery,
can help with affordability, boosts home ownership

Registers: different approaches to measurement – different impacts? - different policy implications?

- Local connection
- Ability to afford
- Access e.g. website
- Mail outs
- Publicity
- Availability of plots
- LA resources and ability to make community links



Do LPAs need a longer-term perspective?

- Registers – major step in measuring short term demand but.....
- Local Plans – 15 years
 - Deal with location of custom and self-build
 - Deal with the when and how
- For developers/landowners - need confidence about demand (especially large scale developments)
- Implications of recent appeal cases in NW Leicestershire and South Cambridgeshire - need to think about long term supply



Measuring Supply: Recent appeal cases

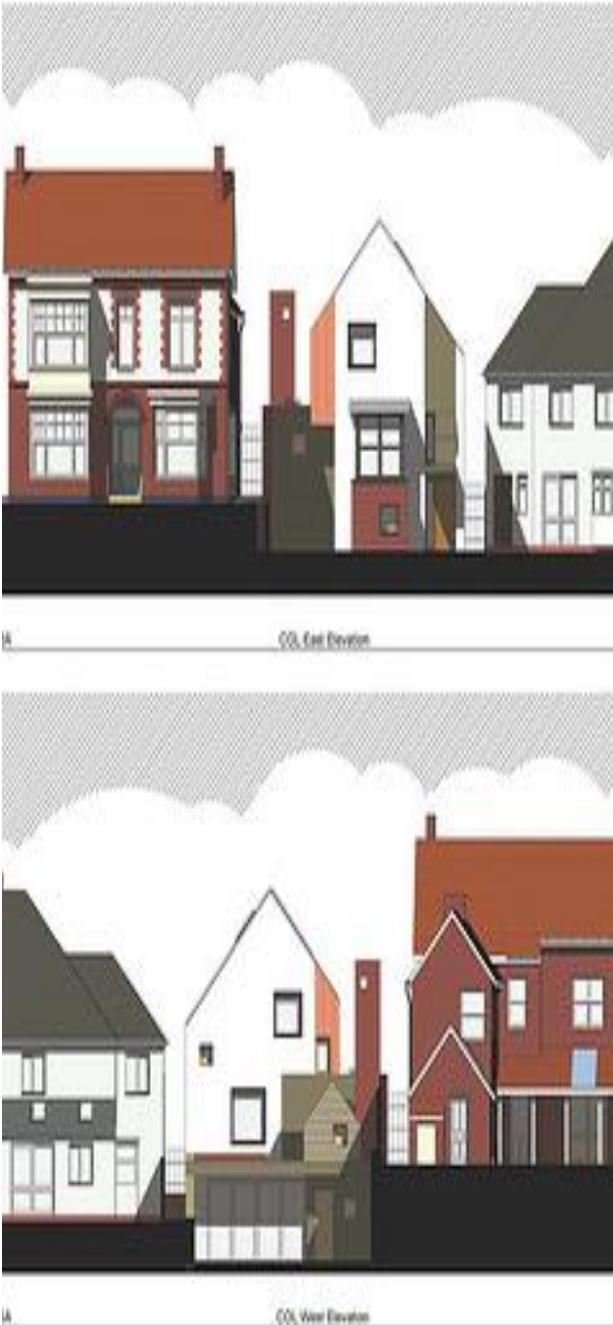
“... this raises considerable doubts as to whether any of the single dwelling permissions would count towards the number of planning permissions the Council has granted for serviced plots and thus whether these consents would actually contribute towards the delivery of self-build and custom housebuilding in the District.”

(para 23 Appeal – North West Leicestershire Land off Hepworth Road, Woodville DE11 7DW Inspector’s decision issued 25/6/19)

“Consequently, the ability of the appeal proposal to address the unmet demand for serviced plots in a comprehensively planned manner, is a material consideration that weighs strongly in favour of the appeal proposal.” (para 26 NW Leics – as above)

“The appellant has put forward evidence relating to a shortfall in the delivery of self-build housing, which is uncontested by the LPA. This shortfall is significant. The Parish Council confirm there is demand within the village for this type of development. I therefore give significant weight to this factor.”

(para 10 Appeal – South Cambs Green End / Heath Road, Gamlingay SG19 3JZ Inspector’s decision issued 23rd September 2019)



Approaches to measuring demand

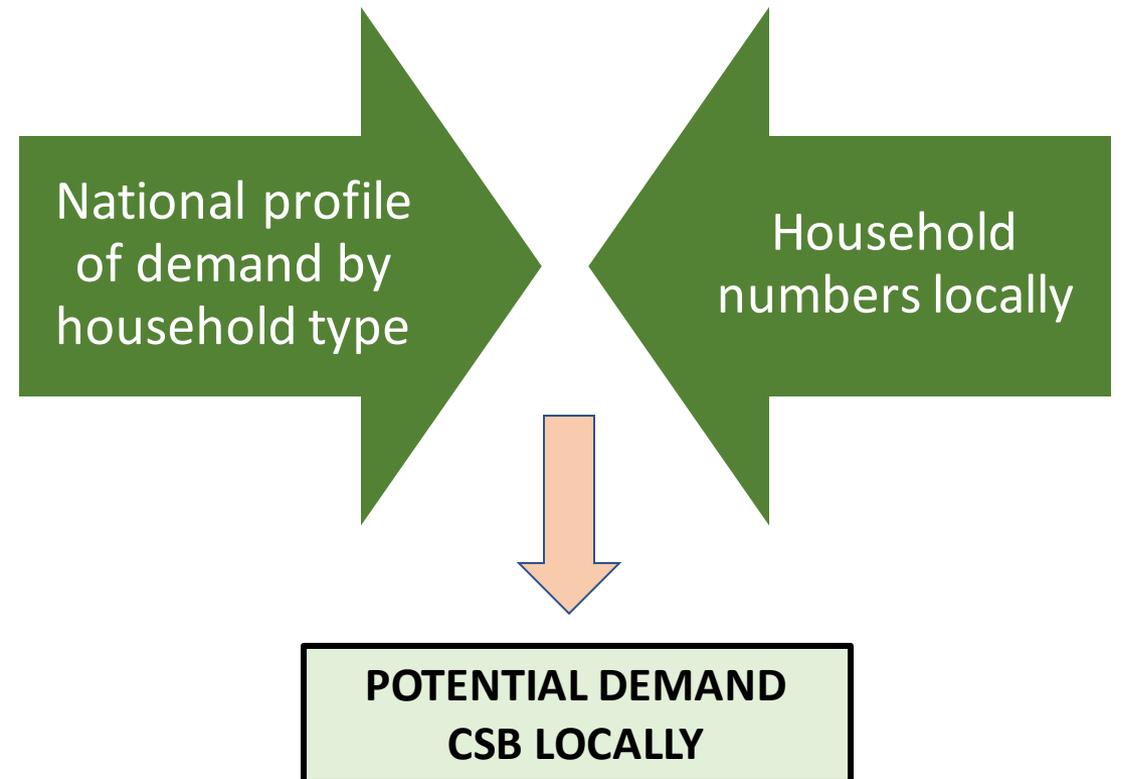
- Guidance in the PPG -

“To obtain a robust assessment of demand for this type of housing in their area, local planning authorities should assess and review the data held on registers. This assessment can be supplemented with the use of existing secondary data sources such as building plot search websites, ‘Need-a-Plot’ information available from the Self Build Portal and enquiries for building plots from local estate agents.”

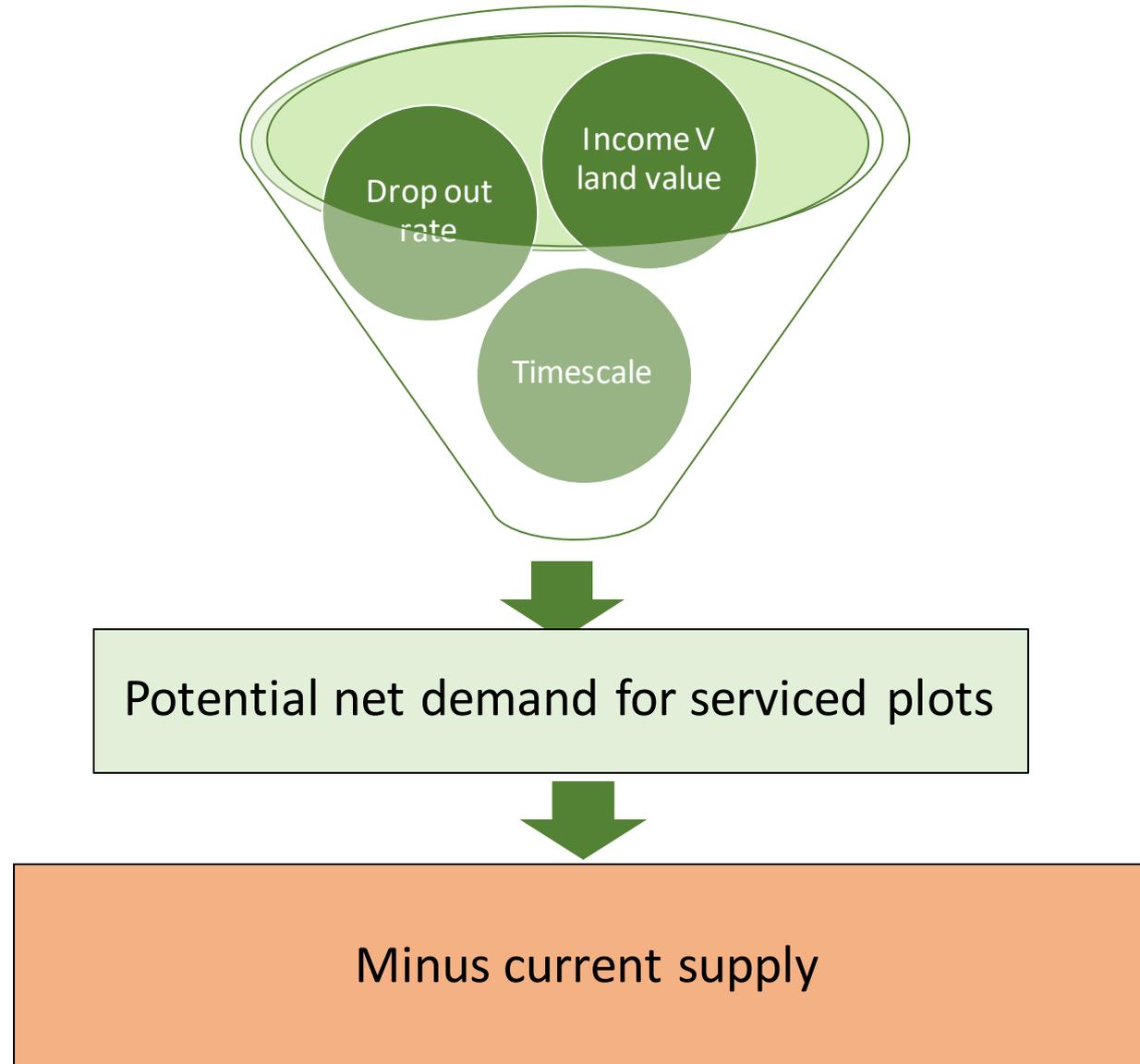
- How to ‘assess and review’?
 - X households on the register
 - Plot sizes & affordability based on those registered
 - 15 times average over X years
 - 15 times average – but ‘tailing off’ in longer term
 - May include/exclude non local households
- Inspectors starting to pick this up – latest register nos on their own may not be enough
- We have developed an “OAN equivalent” for assessing longer term CSB demand

The Demand Model – Step 1

- Nationally – % of households by type who are potential CSB and their characteristics (age, household type) – unique dataset - thanks to NaCSBA
- Match this to the local profile and projections



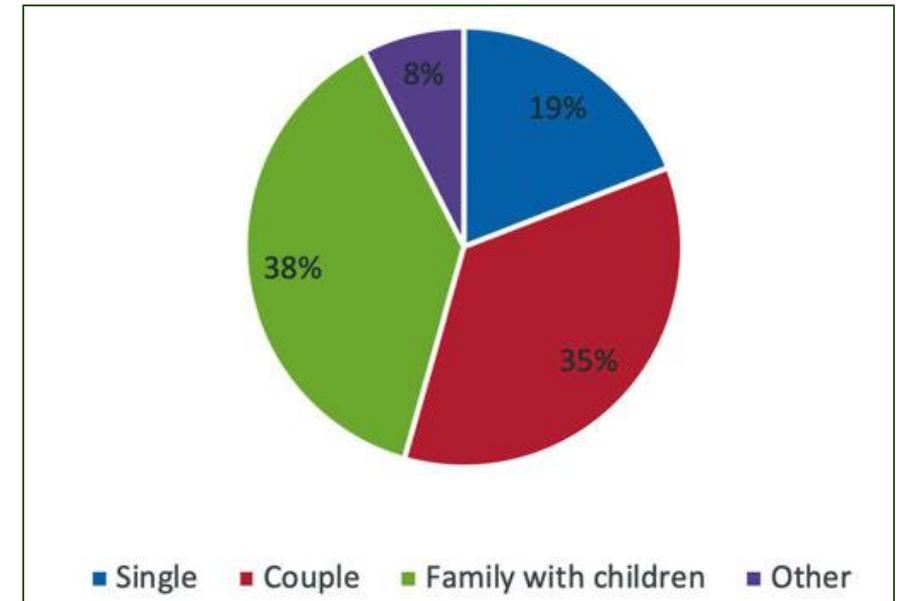
The Demand Model – Step 2



Demand Model - Evidence Outputs

Outputs can be used to inform Local Plans

- Estimate of plots needed over next 5 – 15 years
- Custom v self-build
- Size of plots
- % affordable



Demand into policy

CSB policies in place to help

- Meet demand for CSB
- Increase local housing options
- Create diverse neighbourhoods
- Improve delivery
- Offer affordable and innovative homes
- Ensure good design

Various formats – but 2 main groups.....

- General encouragement “*active consideration of proposals*” (No idea how implemented or enforced!)
- Percentage based – relatively small (5/10%) – may be on all sites, maybe on larger sites only (say 100 + dws)
Very like AH approach



Tresham Garden Village Masterplan by Charlton Brown Architects - local plans can ensure the provision of Custom and Self Build plots

Feedback from inspectorate to date....

Inspectors are looking for evidence to back up policies and taking a view on its reliability.....

- “*Custom and self-build needs were addressed in the SHMAU, although on the information available, no specific need was identified. Nonetheless, **positive support should be lent to appropriate custom and self-build dwellings** that come forward in the Plan area and, as the Policy does not do this, it requires amendment.*” (Report on the Examination of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 29/1/19)
- “*...**the register has not been reviewed** to ascertain whether all those on the list are still seeking a plot. It has therefore not been possible to determine whether the Council’s policy is reasonable*” (Examination of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 – Post Hearing Advice 15/7/19)
- “*Currently 39 people have registered an interest, 35 of whom are looking for full home ownership, and the level of interest has been growing steadily. **Evidence of the need for these forms of housing delivery is not therefore in doubt**.....*” (Inspector’s Report to BC of Wellingborough 20/11/18)
- “*... too prescriptive in requiring larger developments to provide at least 5% of development as serviced plots for self-build/custom-build. **There is not yet the evidence to justify this level of prescription*** There are substantial opportunities for self-build/custom-build from the anticipated small site windfalls ...” (Inspector’s Report to Cornwall Council 23/9/16)

Evidence and policy - where we are up to....

- There has been a start on introducing Local Plan CSB policies – with some reference to evidence
- Fewer Plans reference affordability but they are beginning to (Shropshire, Cornwall, Torbay)
- In terms of affordability and community-led schemes – Neighbourhood Plans can assist
- Implementation mechanisms in some policies (but not all) – e.g. what happens if don't sell CSB plots
- Few policies make specific provision for community groups – who are left to identify themselves and their aims
- Developer concerns remain problems with 'untrammelled' self-build and uncertain about custom build – magnified when 'community' or 'low cost' is added to the equation (LPAs need to address this)
- Supporting guidance – very thin on the ground
- Evidence gathering and policy making still evolving.....

Concluding comments

- CSB registers provide crucial short term picture but
- Longer term view requires a different approach
- As do opportunities for low cost and community-led CSB
- Policies and guidance strengthened by the right evidence base

Thank you

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