SOCIAL HOUSING
THE TRUTH BEHIND THE MYTHS

Myth 1
Most people in social housing are unemployed

Myth 2
I earn too much to qualify for affordable housing, It's for people on benefits

Myth 3
Social housing is full of 'undesirables' and people from away

Myth 4
Social housing looks awful and ruins the look of a village. You can see it from a mile away.

Devon Rural Housing Partnership

Devon Communities Together
helping communities help themselves

Who lives in social housing?

Anyone who cannot afford to buy or rent their own home in the private market. **This can include:**

- Young people wanting to set up their first independent home
- Families needing a larger home or one with cheaper running costs
- Older people or people with health and mobility issues who need a more suitable home for their needs

Truth Myth 1 - Only 1 in 14 (7%) of people who live in social housing are unemployed

Truth Myth 2 - You can now earn up to £80,000 and still qualify to buy a low cost home. You can be working full time and qualify for an affordable rented home

Truth Myth 3 - Social housing in rural areas is occupied by people who have lived in the community for several years, many of whom are employed and work locally

"Moving into this house will make a huge difference to us. We will be close to my parents and other relatives. The rent is much more affordable than our previous private rent. Our utility bills will be much lower and I will only have a short journey to work and to take my children to school. Life will be much less stressful!"

Jamie Bennett

What does modern social housing look like?

Truth Myth 4 - Social housing is now being built to a high standard, designed to fit in with local architecture and to be indistinguishable from private housing. Sustainability standards are high, giving tenants low fuel bills and wasting far less energy.

Christow - Teign Housing

Thorverton - Live West

Dalwood—Yarlington Housing

Hemyock-Hastoe Housing

The photographs on this page show the high standard of recent social housing developments in Devon.

Case Studies

The case studies below describe 2 households who have benefited from social housing in Devon

Case Study 1

Lynn and Glynn lived in a series of private rented homes in their village. Working locally meant they could not move too far away. They had been on the housing register for 15 years but had never found a suitable affordable home. Their rent took up a huge proportion of their monthly income meaning they had little disposable income.

At last, a small development of affordable homes was built in their village. They applied for a 1 bedroom flat and because they had a strong local connection to the village they were offered the flat.

They are now paying an affordable rent and have lower energy bills so are much better off. With a secure tenancy they feel they can make their home their own, safe in the knowledge they will not be asked to leave by the landlord.

> Moving here has enabled us to put down roots in a way we never did before. It is so good to know we can choose to stay here for as long as it suits us"

Case Study 2

Janet has lived in her affordable home for 41 years. She is retired now but worked until she reached 65 and is proud to have contributed to the community in which she lives.

She has benefited from having a secure tenancy and knowing that her home is hers for life. She is delighted to rent from a housing association that invests in their properties to keep them modernised and fit for purpose. The homes are currently going through a programme of works to make them more eco-friendly and economic to run.

> Most people in this neighbourhood have lived here for many years if not decades. We have all grown up together and now have a very strong community based on shared experiences over the years.

Devon Rural Housing Partnership is a partnership of 7 local authorities and 8 housing associations who work to provide affordable housing across Devon.
If you would like further information on affordable housing, please contact the Rural Housing Team on 01392 248919 or email sue@devoncommunties.org.uk or janice@devoncommunities.org.uk