

PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT



1. GENERAL STATEMENT

The Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) upholds the right of local (parish and town) councils to have an unhindered democratic voice on behalf of their local communities.

Recognising that all local councils, whatever their size, are legally constituted entities which represent the first tier of local government, DALC will always champion their right to:

- speak out and make declarations on behalf of their communities
- to be a statutory consultee on constitutional and planning matters
- to lobby for more powers and responsibilities if that is what they wish
- to lead on initiatives that the local community supports
- to take full advantage of powers invested in them for the benefit of their local areas

This meeting also welcomes the County Committee agreement of the following policy positions:

- DALC has signed up to the proposition that there is a climate emergency and will therefore, as a general principle, promote and support moves and policies which help to mitigate it. For instance, DALC supports the need for Local Plans and large developments to be subject to environmental appraisals and it supports energy efficient homes fitted with renewable energy sources where possible, and more trees. DALC also supports larger developments to be easily accessible to public transport, and easy routes of access for walking, cycling and other active travel, along with good access for those with disabilities. Good access to shops, services and infrastructure without a private car should be encouraged.
- DALC will support a planning system which incorporates a significant role for parish and town councils. It will not support any diminution of Town and Parish Councils' statutory right to comment on planning issues at all stages of their evolution, whether they be development planning matters or spatial planning policies.
- DALC will support a soundly based planning system which represents the most reliable tool for the sustainable allocation of land and which represents the three pillars of sustainability equally, ie. social, economic and environmental factors
- DALC will support changes to the planning system which it perceives will strengthen the system and the voice of democracy and lead to better quality, appropriately sited developments. It will not support planning changes which it perceives will work in the opposite direction.
- DALC would support a very much strengthened version of the 'duty to co-operate' between neighbouring local authorities or an alternative policy which made it compulsory for neighbouring LAs to work in close co-operation with each other on spatial planning.
- DALC does not support an across-the-board extension of permitted development rights in the planning system. Policies on permitted development rights should be the prerogative of LAs in their Local Plans or Neighbourhood Planning Groups.
- DALC supports the recommendations of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission.

- DALC recognises the need for more affordable housing and would welcome initiatives that would enable LPAs and parish and town councils to deliver some. In addition, DALC would like to see more housing delivered that is suitable for the disabled and those with mobility impairments and also a range of different types of tenures facilitated.
- DALC wants to see a fair infrastructure levy system which gives local councils a voice and benefits them financially so that they in turn can deliver more for their local communities.
- DALC has concerns about housing tests based on standard methodologies/ algorithms. It wants to see a planning system which recognise that every planning application and every location is different.

2. COMMENTARY:

DALC's County Committee, on behalf parish and town councils in Devon, urges the government to ensure any changes to the planning regime enshrine a continued strong role for our sector, the closest level of democratic input to planning the future development of communities and places.

Adopted: 22.03.21