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13 August 2010

Dear Miss Graham

**Re: Rochford District Council's Affordable Housing Policy and the Emerging Core Strategy**

My name is Carol Dutton and I am Spokesperson for The Hawkwell Action Group which represents some 300 local residents.

I wish to comment on the Affordable Housing Topic and the Emerging Core Strategy as it relates to the Ward of Hawkwell West (or South Hawkwell as the Core Strategy insists on calling it!).

I have never understood the figure of 60 affordable houses allocated to Hawkwell West and I do not believe that Rochford District Council's policy on this has ever been properly explained. It seems to me that 60 affordable houses are the Districts WHOLE year supply and they are all destined for Hawkwell, which is a full two miles from the nearest town, train station and bus hub.

Housing numbers in the Core Strategy are based on RSS targets laid down by the last Government. Local Action Groups have lobbied Councillors to complete a local housing assessment in order to determine exactly what the housing needs are in Rochford District. A Motion was also put to the Council on 27 July 2010 by Councillors John Mason and Michael Hoy, but this was defeated, in my opinion out of hand, led by Councillor Keith Hudson.

Councillor Hudson stated a study has already been completed, but the figures are based on the Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment – May 2010 Update Report, which covers the whole of the Thames Gateway and we believe is designed to fit in with RSS targets.

Nowhere in that study does it justify the small semi rural Ward of Hawkwell West as needing a 175 dwelling housing estate on Green Belt and garden land, with 60 affordable houses. This is just a proportion to satisfy (the abolished) RSS targets and would change the entire character of the area.

I therefore, with respect, put it to you that until a proper local housing study has been completed the Rochford District Council's Emerging Core Strategy is UNSOUND.

I request, on behalf of The Hawkwell Action Group, to voice my Objections at the Hearing on 7 September 2010.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter to you.

Yours sincerely

*Carol Dutton*

Carol Dutton  
Spokesperson for the Hawkwell Action Group