

PO6 Mixed Communities & Wide Choice of Housing

Full version Whole District

OBJECT

Only Part D of PO6 is not fully supported by the Leamington Society:

A. The Leamington Society fully supports the principle of mixed housing and varied types but the means chosen in PO10 will not achieve this:

Garden suburbs prescribes row upon row of uniform suburban plots and is too homogenous. Only a small proportion of the population wants to grow their own food and cultivate a big garden. Many have neither the time, energy nor inclination for this and would be happy with communal parks and gardens and playing fields, which have scale and variety and someone else does the maintenance.

To meet varied need, a wider and more imaginative mix of terraced houses, flats and maisonettes around courtyards, with off-road parking facilities for cars and bicycles and rubbish bins, would take up less land and be more appropriate.

B. No comment.

C. We support the proposals for provision of homes for older people, which are typically built to a density of 50-100 / hectare and are a good example of urban design with communal gardens.

D. We consider it very important to avoid high concentrations of student accommodation and HMOs to maintain a balanced community. We recommend the introduction of maximum percentages of such properties or populations within specified areas. The number of houses in multiple occupancy, whether by students or others, has reached extremely high levels in much of south of the River Leam in Leamington (often referred to as Old Town). WDC has mapped the density of registered HMOs; see Item 6 and Appendices at

<https://estates3.warwickdc.gov.uk/cmIS/Meetingdates/tabid/73/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/410/Meeting/225/Committee/29/Default.aspx>

This high density places an enormous strain on street parking space. Therefore the new local plan needs to

- control both the density of HMOs
- require reasonable levels of off-street car-parking in all new HMOs
- ensure these requirements apply to HMOs, student accommodation and student hostels irrespective of their designation.

The Council should decide whether some areas of Leamington have already reached saturation point, and look at how well located student hostels could help manage the problem of over concentration.

With reference to PO5 (Affordable housing) WDC should also appreciate that HMOs now occupy many of the smaller and more affordable family houses, particularly in the South of Leamington (Old Town). The absence of any policy to restrict the many recent conversions to HMOs has aggravated the problem of affordable housing: they are so profitable for landlords that poorer families are priced out of the market.