

Fair Housing for Frome – Work plan 2018-20

Overview

Fair Housing for Frome (FHfF) is a new grassroots organisation that began in November 2015 when a group of local people met to discuss the housing crisis in our town. Its objective is to support the provision of decent, secure, affordable and accessible accommodation in Frome for local people on low incomes who are being squeezed out by rising prices, stagnating wages and profit-led developments and practices. FHfF wants to be an example of how local volunteer-led activism can create a positive can-do attitude and enable a rural town to maintain a diverse and vibrant community despite local and national socio-economic pressures.

Phase One: 2017

Phase One of FHfF's work consisted of a programme of nine free public events attended by 180+ local people. These events investigated different dimensions of the housing problem in Frome, explored solutions and good practice from elsewhere, and gathered suggestions and offers of support. Additional people were reached via social media and regular articles in the local press, and many helpful connections were made.

Phase Two: 2018-20

Phase Two of FHfF's work (2018-20) will consist of taking forward the 12-point plan below, which is based on opportunities and priorities identified during Phase One. FHfF is grateful to have received funding from The Tudor Trust and from Frome Town Council which will enable it to employ a development worker to co-ordinate and lead on these activities, in partnership with a wide range of local organisations and individuals.

Preventing homelessness

1. Publicise the services that already exist and how to access them
2. Identify and fill gaps eg a housing advocate scheme for families at risk
3. Campaign for affordable units within new housing developments
4. Continue raising awareness and developing housing literacy in the town

Enhancing the private rented sector

5. Establish a Fair Landlords club
6. Set up and support a tenants association for PRS tenants
7. Promote lodging, including a Homeshare scheme
8. Explore how to improve practice among local letting agents

Supporting tiny homes

9. Carry out a Citizens Land Audit to identify short-term and long-term sites
10. Secure support from the three tiers of local government (Somerset, Mendip, Frome)
11. Showcase good practice eg by hosting a tiny homes summit
12. Set up a Community Land Trust and explore funding possibilities eg a local investment scheme

