

Acklington Neighbourhood Plan Topic Paper on Non Principal Residency

1. Background

In the initial public consultation on the Acklington Neighbourhood Plan (“ANP”) in autumn of 2021 residents were asked what was important to them in the Parish. Across the parish residents felt that keeping a sense of identity and community was very important. Residents also responded that having housing for local people and families was important to them.

When asked what they liked about living in Acklington Parish residents highlighted the community spirit in the parish, good neighbours and the tranquillity of the parish.

Regarding their fears and concerns for the parish residents mentioned over development, an increase in holiday homes and a lack of housing for local people. Residents also stated that the character of their parish, and specifically Guyzance, should not be damaged by an increase in self-catering properties.

The results of the initial public consultation are available at <https://northumberlandparishes.uk/sites/default/files/parish-councils/documents/2022/January/Results%20of%20initial%20public%20consultation%20v1.0%20isued.pdf>

The ANP Steering Group then consulted on the Vision and Objectives. In view of the comments received in the initial consultation round, one of the questions asked was “Should we restrict new holiday homes?” 82% of responses were in favour of restricting new holiday homes. The reasons for this were the effect of holiday homes on the local communities in Acklington Parish and the effect second homes have on the character of the different areas in Acklington Parish. .

For detailed responses see Annex 1.

2. Data on Holiday Homes in Acklington Parish

The data on non-residential properties is shown in the table below.

		<u>Number of residential properties registered for council tax (excluding second homes)</u>	<u>Number of Self catering properties from Business Rates</u>	<u>Second Homes</u>	<u>Total properties</u>	<u>% Non-Principal Residency</u>
Guyzance	conservation area	12	5	1	18	33%
Acklington settlement		150	2	0	152	1%

HMRC provide data on council tax for residential properties and on business rates and Council Tax data was used for second homes..

These sources are

Council Tax <https://www.tax.service.gov.uk/check-council-tax-band/search>

Business Rates <https://www.tax.service.gov.uk/business-rates-find/search?load=true>

The data used in the table above is included in Annex 2.

Properties must be registered for either council tax or business rates but not both. For the purpose of the table above the assumption is that all self-catering properties are registered for business rates and all properties registered for council tax are residential properties.

There is a risk that some properties registered for council tax are used as self-catering properties for all or part of the year or as second homes without this being declared. As any such properties are not included as holiday or second homes the percentages shown in the table above. If such properties exist then the percentage of non-principal residency properties would increase. .

3. Proposed Policy

The proposed policy for Principal Occupancy Dwellings is

All new dwellings proposed in the Acklington Settlement Boundary or within the Guyzance Conservation area will be for principal residency only where the non-principal dwelling residency rates exceeds 20% within the settlement boundary for Acklington village or within the Guyzance Conservation Area respectively.

4. Impact on Acklington Parish residents

The impact of the increase in non-residential properties has had a major impact on Acklington parish as shown from the responses in Annex 1. These responses can be summarised in the following key points regarding second homes;

- make it difficult for young people to buy a home in Acklington Parish
- mean options for staying in the parish are limited for older residents looking to downsize
- change the character of Acklington Parish negatively.

79% of respondents to the Vision and Objectives consultation wanted to see a restriction on holiday homes in Acklington Parish.

5. On-going monitoring

For the monitoring of parish level data in the future there are alternative sources;

1. Council tax- If a holiday home is available to let to other people for less than 140 days per year, council tax is payable. This data can be requested from Northumberland County Council by postcode for Acklington parish under a Freedom of Information request.
2. Business rates - Business rates are payable if a property is available to let for 140 days or more per year. Properties cannot be registered for Council Tax and Business rates, so the number of holiday lets is addition to those identified as second homes. This data is available on Northumberland County Council open data site.
3. Local knowledge of properties used as second homes/holiday lets or left vacant as non-principal residencies. Some properties are let on commercial websites but are not included under council tax relief or under business rates.

6. Annex 1

Responses to Vision and Objectives Consultation regarding holiday homes

Response	Comment
Yes	Restricts home ownership for locals. Splits families in long term. Nationwide problem
Yes	there are too many and they do not assist in community related issues, or rather occupiers don't
Yes	as seen in other locations these have a -ve impact often destroying the heart and soul of village
Yes	You should prioritise affordable housing over holidays homes within the available space
Yes	
yes	to some extent too many holiday homes mean fewer properties for local people and ghost town effect off season
Yes	
Yes	they destroy the character of the area and pay minimal rates and council tax
Yes	our public services are spread too thin before all these developments
Yes	Whole area is swamped with holiday homes making it almost impossible for young people or lower income families to buy a home
Yes	If possible the building of homes for holiday homes must be restricted as they drive up the prices for local housing out of the reach of local residents
Yes	They don't contribute to the community just the owners pockets
Yes	More Holiday homes would make it even more difficult for young local people to buy.
Yes	With the shortage of housing residential homes should take priority. There are plenty of holiday homes in the area already plus the two caravan parks. Holiday makers tend to come and go and do not really contribute to the community. They don't have any commitment to the area but use it simply for their convenience.
Yes	Acklington is a rural village which already has sufficient holiday/second homes.
Yes	Affordable homes should be prioritised over holiday homes within the available space BUT I don't think we need any more development - why can't we just stick with what we have?

Yes	They take away building assets from younger residents looking to remain in the village and older residents looking to down-size. Besides, they are seasonal and do not contribute towards the valuable community ethos within the village.
Yes	There will be a loss of our sense of community
Yes	Holiday homes and second homes change the nature of the parish so should be considered together (see St Ives NP). The NP should promote new development that are the principal residence and be considered on a ward basis
Yes	they inflate the cost of housing and deny younger members of the community the opportunity to buy locally. Additionally an increase in second homes/holiday lets erodes the sense of community in of the parish
Yes	Holiday homes contribute nothing to the local area, properties registered for business rates do not make a contribution to local taxes ie council tax so less income to support local facilities. Transient occupants have no interest in local community.
Yes	Because there is little local commerce that would benefit from people coming to holiday homes (only maybe the Railway Inn) and more traffic through the main street would cause more pollution for residents.
Yes	Acklington is a community where people have the opportunity to support each other and do so through activities at the church and the village hall and through the care of the local environment e.g. by planting flowers, litter picking and footpath maintenance. The spirit of the community would diminish if there were more dwellings given over to holiday homes particularly if they are empty all through the winter. Acklington already has sufficient holiday-makers through the Railway Inn and Coal Houses Farm. Allowing more holiday homes also inflates house prices often meaning local people have to move away.
Yes	because despite the parish currently (on average) being under the holiday home quota within the parish there are isolated areas which are in grave danger of becoming over 50% holiday homes(guyzance and possibly bank house)
yes	Because of increased traffic and emissions in rural area with roads not designed for it, increased noise for residents, littering etc. Too many holiday lets prices permanent residents out of the area
Yes	Because these people will not become part of the community
Yes	Because it is pricing local people out from buying house
Unsure	Holiday makers support the local economy but there's a balance to be had
Unsure	It brings people to the area who will spend money and that provides more investment in our locality
No	Don't think this is big problems. There is plenty of affordable housing nearby eg within 5 miles
No	

7. Annex 2 Data on Properties in Acklington Parish



HMRC Business Rates
data.docx



Council tax data
Valuation Office via HI



Acklington Parish
holiday homes v5.0 HI