

North Horsham Parish Council

Notes from the Meeting of the Community Land Trust Working Party held on Thursday 28th March 2019 at 6pm at Roffey Millennium Hall, Crawley Road Horsham.

In attendance:-

Alison Best- Dufour - Resident

Cllr Alan Britten – North Horsham Parish Council

Mark Daly – Planning Officer, Horsham District Council

Cllr James Davidson – North Horsham Parish Council

Cllr Joy Gough – North Horsham Parish Council

Cllr Richard Millington – North Horsham Parish Council

Graham Maunders – Community Led Housing Advisor, Sussex Community Housing Hub, Action in Rural Sussex

Stuart Norton - Resident

Cllr Ray Turner – North Horsham Parish Council

Pauline Whitehead – note taker.

Apologies

No apologies

The aim of the meeting was to ascertain the extent of affordable housing need for North Horsham – the housing waiting list; HDC future housing need analysis and the extent of the North Horsham development affordable housing provision requirements and to obtain further details of the intention/ nature of provision that might be expected from the Horsham District Council housing company – social housing/ affordable housing , number of homes and timescale.

Graham Maunders briefly explained that a Community Land Trust (CLT) can hold an asset locked for community use in perpetuity. A CLT is a legal entity in its own right, it has its own board, usually populated by local people and that it makes its own decisions. There are sources of funding available for CLTs to operate, but often they work in partnership with other local organisations such as the Parish and/or District Council.

Mark Daly explained that Housing Associations are doing good work to provide affordable property, but these tend to be larger organisations that have their management board some distance away and therefore, it is not so easy for local people to have any influence in what they provide. They provide homes with rent levels that are locally affordable, but they are in control of their housing stock and tend only to be interested in larger developments of 30 plus houses. CLTs could

work to complement Housing Associations by looking at small infill areas of land which could sustain lower numbers of houses, but which could be rented locally at affordable rents.

There are 583 households currently on the housing waiting list in Horsham District. By far the majority of those have a preference for Horsham Town, although as the list is District wide, some look to be housed in the outlying villages. An enquiry was made as to the demographic split of the households on the register. This information would be passed on separately.

The National Planning Policy Framework, Horsham District Planning Framework and Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) all recommend 35% Affordable Housing on new development. Of that 35%, Horsham District Council's SHMA recommends that 20% is one bedroom housing, 45% is 2 bedroom housing, 25% is 3 bedroom housing and 10% is 4 bedroom plus housing, to address a shortage of one and two bedroom properties.

The Legal Agreement for the development north of Horsham secures 21.6% affordable housing with an additional 8.3% for housing for local need.

Affordable Housing

Affordable rented units – 12.73% (350 units)

Shared ownership units – 5.27% (145 units)

Discount market units – 3.64% (100 units)

Housing for Local Need

Build to rent units – 7.27% (200 units)

Custom of self build units – 1.09% (30 units)

The scheme would provide a maximum of 595 affordable housing units with 230 housing units for local need. This information had been given previously at one of the North of Horsham Parish Liaison Meetings. The proposed type of housing mix broken down by house size would be circulated separately.

Land is not available for social rented housing, but HDC is hoping to establish an affordable housing company to reduce the number of those accommodated in bed and breakfast in the area.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) completed in 2015 shows the land in North Horsham that is available for development. This will be updated at the end of May when the Local Plan Review has been completed.

The Government definition of Affordable housing is 80% of market value rent, but a person who lives and works in Horsham would need 14 times their salary to afford many of the properties in Horsham, therefore housing is not affordable to many people.

Currently the mix of houses on the development isn't known, it will only be as the developers put forward proposals that the details will be known.

The meeting was advised that when the Parish Council had approached the developer with regard to a CLT for the development north of Horsham the reaction had not been hostile, so that remains a possibility for the future.

The target for the Bohunt School is 2021 so it is likely that developers will start approaching HDC with plans relatively soon. Legal and General Capital has their own housing company, so they too will be looking at how they can develop the site.

HDC is progressing with their Housing Development Company and Housing Management Company. All houses will be locally affordable for rent. The company is looking at 65 – 70 houses on land scattered around the District. This has only just received approval so there are no time frames available yet. The key driver for setting up the Housing Development and Management Companies is to try to encourage people to live and work in the same vicinity. Many parishes are dormitory settlements where people leave in the morning and come back in the evening, they are losing their sense of place and community and the facilities that encourage families to move into them.

There is undeveloped land on Crawley Road between Jewsons and number 78 which belongs to the NHS. This is currently not available for development and the NHS estates have to maximise their assets so it is not likely that they would give the land at a reasonable price for development.

A question of whether a CLT would be in competition with HDC's companies was raised especially if they were both looking for suitable land to develop. Further guidance would be needed on this. It was observed that Arun District Council has 3 active CLTs and that the District Councils and CLTs are working in partnership through active communication and collaborative working practices.

Having listened to the information that had been given, those in attendance wanted to understand more about the structure of a CLT and moving forward.

A CLT has Trustees with a range of skills and experience. Usually Trustees are elected for a 3 year term with a maximum of nine years. CLTs are usually made up of around 8 people with possibly two Parish Councillors. The CLT would aim to hold the freehold of any land acquired and to establish the right type of housing to accommodate need. A CLT can acquire buildings to refurbish.

It was observed that large house builders can utilise economies of scale , whereas the cost of building just a few houses could be more expensive.

Graham Maunders offered examples of communities that have CLTs that are working well, for example in Icklesham, East Sussex. Icklesham CLT is working with Hastoe Housing Association to develop plans for a local housing development currently awaiting planning permission. The arrangement allows local influence on the management, lettings and the rents.

Angmering Community Land Trust has a more hands on approach. They are involved in employing an architect and managing the design and build of twelve houses. The Parish Council gave land to provide affordable housing and encouraged the formation of a CLT to oversee and manage this project.

HDC supports the Sussex Community Housing Hub service provided by AIRS as Horsham District needs more affordable housing so are willing to look at any way of providing it.

The working party wanted to get a better idea of what is involved in running a CLT including how the administration was handled by asking those already involved with CLTs to come and talk about their experiences. Graham felt this could be a possibility.

There is support for CLTs from AIRS from inception to completion. Funding comes from a range of sources including the Community Housing Fund, Charity Bank, Triodos Bank and local bonds or share schemes.

It was suggested that it may be useful to speak with neighbouring Parish Councils to assess if there is any interest. An enquiry was made regarding whether there is a legal requirement for a CLT to confine its activities within the parish boundary. In establishing a CLT the area of benefit is defined and enshrined in its legal governing instrument (rules of operation). The purpose of the CLT is to provide benefit to the defined community of benefit which usually means housing or other assets are acquired within that defined community. The legal instrument can be varied at a later date, but can only be varied with majority agreement of members and at additional legal cost.

It was further observed that the Parish Council and residents would need more information to make any offer attractive and that whilst the Parish Council can be the catalyst, more residents are needed to form a CLT. It was suggested that a CLT usually starts with a Steering Group who then hold a public meeting to see if it can progress. A CLT is driven by people with a vision for helping those in need.

In summary it was agreed to ask if a presentation could be arranged from an existing CLT group to find out how they managed the first stages and to outline possible pitfalls.

Cllr Britten thanked Mark Daly, Graham Saunders and those in attendance and closed the meeting at 7.05pm.