

North Horsham Parish Council

Notes from the open public Meeting of the Community Land Trust Working Party held on Tuesday 10th December 2019 at Roffey Millennium Hall, Crawley Road starting at 7pm.

Welcome and introductions

There were 22 people in attendance including members of the Community Land Trust (CLT) Working Party, Cllr J Gough, Cllr J Davidson, Cllr J Smithurst, Cllr R Turner, Cllr A Shine and Mr S Norton. The remaining were local residents, a representative of St. Mark's Church and Horsham Society.

Graham Maunders, Community Led Housing Advisor from the Sussex Community Hub attended and Pauline Whitehead BA(Hons) FSLCC, Clerk to the Parish Council took notes.

Ms A Best- Dufour, who is a member of the CLT Working Party gave apologies.

Graham Maunders gave a presentation entitled 'All about Community Trusts'

A copy of the presentation is attached to the notes.

Questions to Graham.

It was queried **whether CLTs were a Government funded initiative?** The response explained that initially community led housing was a grass roots initiative with local communities in scattered locations throughout England and Wales working first in isolation, then joining together to try to find affordable housing solutions in their own area, seeking their own funding streams. In 2016 the Government announced the £300 million Community Housing Fund.

Is there a certain amount of land set aside for Community Land Trust properties? There is no specific requirement for land to be set aside for community housing, however, Local Planning Authorities may have their own policy requirements for the amount of affordable housing to be provided on new developments.

A CLT typically provides homes for people local to a designated area to rent. The homes are owned by the CLT in perpetuity meaning that houses cannot be sold on. The government's definition when it comes to renting is that affordable homes should cost no more than 80% of the average local market rent. In South East England, 80% of the average local market rent is not affordable for some families. Typically CLT's aim to offer homes they own nearer to 60% of local market rent, making it a life changing opportunity for some. Some Local Authorities are recognising the benefits that CLTs provide by offering suitable land that becomes available to them before offering it out to Housing Associations, it is hoped that more Local Authorities adopt this model.

Concern was raised specifically in relation to the development north of Horsham that affordable housing wouldn't be on site. This is sometimes the practice in urban areas like London Boroughs where there are site limitations and provision is made on another site. The North Horsham CLT Working Party has opened up a dialogue with Legal and General who are developing the site north of Horsham and who are working through internal processes at the moment. Legal and General are interested in finding out more about the CLT and to acknowledge this they supported the North Horsham CLT co-exhibiting with them at recent consultation days at the Holbrook Club on North Heath Lane.

Where is the funding coming from? The Government announced the Community Housing Fund in December 2016 – some £300m over 4 years. It is due to close in 2020. In the first phase 148 Local Authorities with a large proportion of second homes and an affordability crisis in their areas received £60m of funding. The second phase announced in July 2018 of £163 million is being administered by Homes England, a government agency. It has been suggested that the fund will be extended.

How environmentally friendly will any homes built by the North Horsham CLT be? At the stage of building homes as part of a CLT initiative, it would be the Board of the CLT that would decide what specification the homes would have. Most homes are built with the aim of keeping running costs to a minimum as by their nature they are for those on low incomes. When the North Horsham Community Land Trust becomes a legal entity in its own right it will have no jurisdiction over what developers do, that would be down to the Planning Authority to decide through the planning process, but, developers are keen to work with the community to try to eradicate resistance when their plans are put forward, so a CLT could influence outcomes within a development on that basis.

Is there a CLT in Horsham? There are other CLTs in Horsham District, but not one in the unparished area of Horsham town. North Horsham Parish Council started the North Horsham CLT initiative and spent about a year looking into it. The initiative was advertised and the working party took part in the Legal and General consultation events. From that 125 people expressed an interest in finding out more. A CLT owns any home they build in perpetuity, so the homes are for the long term benefit of the community.

How does that work with self-build? The CLT could manage homes that have been self built or with shared equity and hold the free hold. In some cases the CLT may acquire a piece of land and built houses which are sold in order to cross subsidise the building of affordable houses. The CLT Board has the power to decide this. The Board is accountable to its members and any resident can be a member. Members can attend Annual General Meetings and stand for election to the Board to influence the decisions that are made.

North Horsham CLT, when formed, will not be tied in to Legal and General but would look at using any available land in North Horsham to provide affordable homes. It could also acquire existing property. Their key driver will be the needs of the local community.

Prize draw

The winner of the bottle of wine donated by the Chairman of North Horsham Parish Council is J. Broggio.

Our way forward as North Horsham CLT

The Steering Committee will be formed at the next meeting of the North Horsham CLT on January 8th 2020 starting at 6pm at Roffey Millennium Hall.

Legal requirements – to assist in the formation of the CLT, Sussex Community Housing will be supporting the process and there is access to legal documents through the CLT Network, which the North Horsham CLT is a member of.

Availability of land – the CLT will continue to explore possibilities for sites on which to build community housing.

Your membership of North Horsham CLT – All those who displayed an interest in the CLT will be contacted to ascertain if they would like to become members. There will be a membership fee of £1 per member.

Ways that you can help – whilst the Steering Committee has to have a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, there are lots of other ways in which the CLT can be supported with specialist skills, enthusiasm and a willingness to get involved.

There being no further business, Cllr Gough closed the meeting at 8.20pm.

There were no recommendations to the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee but the notes of the meeting would be circulated to all Councillors and noted at the next meeting on 19th December 2019.