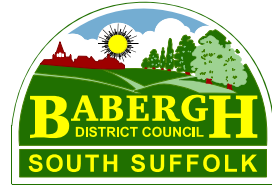


Babergh

Affordable Housing News



SUMMER 2008

Great News For Great Cornard!

The family of a former clergyman officially unveiled a plaque in his memory after a new development of affordable homes was named in his honour.

Clibbon Court, in Great Cornard, near Sudbury, will provide 11 homes for affordable rent and 12 homes for shared ownership, including a three-bed wheelchair-adapted bungalow for a local family.

The homes are part of a wider North Cornard Regeneration Project and the next phase of the project will see the demolition and redevelopment of the old Poplar Road shopping centre. This will provide a mix of shops and residential units and a new community facility.

Clibbon Court is named after Canon Cecil Clibbon, a well-known member of the local community around the time of the Second World War.

The homes have been built on the site of the former Clibbon House sheltered housing scheme after it was identified for redevelopment by Babergh District Council's Housing Panel because it was deemed no longer fit for purpose.



The development was made possible after Babergh donated the land to Flagship Housing Group, which in turn secured Housing Corporation funding, because Sudbury and Great Cornard have some of the highest demands for affordable housing.

The scheme has been developed by Babergh's North Cornard Regeneration Group made up of representatives from Flagship Housing Group, Great

Cornard Parish Council, Babergh District Councillors, and other stakeholders. Pot Kiln Primary School, which is next to the new homes, has been particularly active and the children have taken a keen interest in all stages of the development.

Alderman Mrs Mary Hawgood, the Canon's daughter, unveiled the plaque at the ceremony in June.

Ian Tippet, Babergh's Strategic Housing Manager, said: "Babergh is committed to developing affordable housing opportunities within the district because we know demand from local people is high.

"We are delighted with this latest development at Clibbon Court and are sure it will be a fantastic addition to the local community.

"This is another example of Babergh using existing housing stock that is no longer fit-for-purpose and turning it into a brilliant opportunity for local people to be able to afford a rental or shared ownership property."

Doug Malins, Head of Business Development at Flagship Housing Group, added: "This superb housing scheme at Clibbon Court will continue to meet the needs of local people by providing affordable homes for rent, and for sale on a shared ownership and shared equity basis.

"We hope all the residents will enjoy their new homes."



Ian Tippet

Challenging times in an uncertain housing market

Welcome to the Summer 2008 edition of Babergh's Affordable Housing News.

This edition offers you the latest news on national and local affordable housing matters.

I am sure you are aware that many of the national house builders are reducing their output. This coincides with central government urging the delivery of more and more housing, across all tenures, to meet our national housing shortage.

Locally our concern is that a further deterioration of the housing market will affect the delivery of those homes that have not been started - and of course the negotiation of further homes.

An important area of work for Babergh is understanding our local housing market. To achieve this we are currently undertaking two pieces of research. The first is our first Strategic Housing Market assessment (SHMA). The second is our fourth Housing Needs Survey (HNS).

Information on both pieces of work is available on our website, or should you require more detailed information please contact me by email or on 01473 825847.

How Babergh funds affordable housing

Providing housing of any kind is an expensive business – and affordable housing is no exception.

Babergh works with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) as developing partners - Flagship Housing Group, Orwell, Orbit and Hastoe Housing Associations and Suffolk Housing Society through its development arm Icen Homes – to expand affordable housing stock in the district.

All affordable housing must have some form of subsidy and there are two main ways this is achieved:

1. *Through planning obligations.* Babergh uses planning policy to require private developers to provide affordable housing on new developments as a condition of their planning permission. The developer enters into a Section 106 agreement where the number of affordable homes is agreed. Once built, these homes are transferred to a RSL with Babergh retaining nomination rights for tenants and Shared Ownership buyers.
2. *Housing Corporation Grant funding.* Housing associations do not have the funds to finance all developments and rely on grants from the Housing Corporation. These grants are used to develop free or discounted land offered by the council or to develop Rural Exceptions sites, which are brought forward in partnership with Parish Councils

Babergh builds up a clearer picture of the district's housing need through Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) and Housing Needs Surveys (HNS), together with information from our Housing Register and village housing needs surveys.

If you would like further information about how Babergh provides affordable housing in the district or you are a parish council that would like to talk about the options open to your village/parish then please call Ian Tippett, Tim Cottrell or Tracey Brinkley, Babergh's Affordable Housing Team, on (01473) 825757 or visit www.babergh.gov.uk for more information.

New Homes for Cockfield!

We are delighted to announce the completion of 5 new affordable homes at Cross Green, Cockfield. Built by Orwell Housing Association in partnership with Cockfield Parish Council, these are an excellent example of sensitively developed local needs housing.



Affordable housing projects require an immense amount of work and input from numerous people across councils and partner agencies. This is the second in a series of articles where Affordable Housing News will be profiling our colleagues from the housing associations that Babergh works with to deliver housing projects across the district.

Meet the Partners!



Hi, my name is Isobel Wright and I am a Development Officer for Hastoe Housing Association, covering the Suffolk area.

Hastoe is a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) which covers most of the southern part of England. I am based at our Eastern Regional office in Little Chesterford near Saffron Walden.

Hastoe mainly develop rural exceptions sites. These are sites outside of the village development boundary that can only be developed for affordable housing and can only be used to house people with a local connection.

We get involved once a Housing Needs Survey has been carried out by the Rural Housing Enabler - and at the invitation of a parish council.

My role is very varied. Unlike other housing associations, I am the sole port of call for a scheme right through from inception to completion.

I not only deal with getting a scheme up to planning approval but I am also actively involved with the scheme during building, right up to completion of the homes and handing over to the new residents.

I am currently working on a few schemes in Babergh district. I am making site investigations in Long Melford and Chelmondiston. This can be a lengthy process but hopefully we will be successful in securing suitable sites in these areas. I am also liaising with an architect to try and bring forward a scheme in Copdock.

It is challenging at times but no two schemes are ever the same so there is always a lot of variety.

A personal highlight for me is showing residents around their new homes prior to the completion of the scheme. It is great to see people so excited about being given the opportunity to stay in the village where they grew up.

Babergh Land Search

One of the most important contributions that Babergh can make to the delivery of affordable housing is the identification of council-owned land that may have development potential.

Over the last four years a number of our new affordable housing schemes have been delivered on sites owned by Babergh – either through the regeneration of existing stock, or on previously undeveloped land.

Aaron Moss, Babergh's Senior Surveyor in the Contract & Asset Management Division, will visit once a site has been identified and, with advice from our planners, draw up an outline proposal if there is enough local need for affordable housing.

This process is designed to test whether or not it is appropriate to consider using the site for affordable housing purposes.

Having drawn up an initial proposal, Aaron will work with Babergh's Affordable Housing Team to refine the proposal to ensure it meets local need and respects its location.

If a scheme seems viable, Babergh's next priority is



to seek the approval of our Housing Panel to include the site on our Affordable Housing Pipeline. Babergh's Affordable Housing Team will then discuss the site with the Parish Council and select a suitable Housing Association to bring the scheme to fruition, subject to consultation and planning permission.

Our aim with all these sites is to work in partnership with Parish Councils and our partner Housing Associations to meet local people's affordable housing needs.

Parish Council Sa

Every year we like to ask our partners and stakeholders how they feel about the service provided by the Babergh Affordable Housing Team.

So I would be grateful if you would take a few minutes to answer the questions below and let me have the completed forms back by 1 September 2008.

Please return to Ian Tippett, Strategic Housing Manager, Babergh District Council, Corks Lane, Hadleigh, IPSWICH IP7 6SJ

Q1 Are the Council's policies on the delivery of affordable housing clear and understandable?

(See www.babergh.gov.uk – Click on Housing then Affordable Housing)

YES/ NO

If NO, please explain

Q2 Are you satisfied with opportunities you have to contribute to the development of the Council's Planning Policy on Affordable Housing provision in the District?

YES/NO

If NO, what sort of involvement would you like?

Q3 Does the Council provide you with a good quality service when developing affordable housing schemes?

YES/NO

If NO, what improvements would you like to see?

Satisfaction Survey

Q4 Do you find officers in the Affordable Housing Team approachable and helpful?

YES/NO

If NO, how would you like to see things improved? _____

Q5 Do you feel that you get a seamless service from Housing & Planning Officers of the Council on Affordable Housing issues?

YES/NO

If NO, how can this service be improved? _____

Q6 Do you think the council has sufficient information on the housing need of the District, and are you able to access this when you require it?

YES/NO

If NO, what information would you like made available and how would you like to access it?

Q7 Are you satisfied with the consultation exercises undertaken with you on new affordable housing schemes?

YES/NO

If NO, how can we improve our service in this area? _____

Parish Council Satisfaction Survey continued...

Q8 Are you satisfied with the monthly 'e' Newsletter and Affordable Housing News publications that we produce?

YES/NO

If NO, how can these be improved? _____

Q9 – If you attended our recent Local Homes for Local people Day did you find this useful and would you like a similar event held during 2009?

Useful? Yes/No

2009 event? Yes/No

If you would like a 2009 event are there any particular issues you would like included?

If you have any other comments please note them here:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your answers will help us to develop our service.

Buildings becoming homes

After the last edition's update on affordable housing developments in progress, here is a round-up of some of the schemes that have been completed since the autumn.

Beaumont Close, in Bures St Mary was completed in December and has provided eight houses and one bungalow for affordable rent.

The site was difficult to develop because of the steep geography and problems with ground water. Villager Arthur Beaumont, who is celebrating his 100th birthday this year and after whom the scheme is named, officially opened the nine-home development in April.

In **Cockfield**, the properties at Cross Green are the second phase of affordable housing provision in the village and were completed in April 2008. See picture on page 2.

The scheme provides two bungalows and one house for affordable rent, with two houses for shared ownership.

The third phase of Cockfield's affordable housing programme at Howe Lane should be complete in October and work has just started on the final phase of three homes at Green Lane.

Dove House Meadow, in Great Cornard, is part of a large redevelopment on the site of the former Bakers Mill, on the banks of the River Stour.

This has delivered 31 new, affordable homes that will be owned and managed by Suffolk Housing Society.

This is a good example of Babergh working in partnership with a housing association and a private developer to increase the supply of affordable housing in the district.

Another example of partnership working between the public and private sector is the affordable housing provision on the site of **St Bartholomew's Priory**, Sudbury.

Suffolk Housing Society has been able to acquire 22 houses for affordable rent as well as eight bungalows – two of them wheelchair adapted – along with 15 homes for shared ownership.

So far 34 of the properties have been handed over, with the remainder due by the end of July.

Babergh has also negotiated for two flats for rent and one house for shared ownership on the site of the former coach depot in **Long Bessels**, Hadleigh.

Historically, the town has always had a need for more flats for affordable rent. The properties were handed over in January to Suffolk Heritage Housing Association which will own and manage the properties.

Since 1992 there has been an ongoing programme of affordable housing delivery on various sites in the Rotheram Road area of Bildeston and the final phase of this work has now been completed.

Babergh has been working in partnership with Bildeston Parish Council, Orbit Housing Association, and the Housing Corporation and the handover of the last 15 houses at Artiss Close took place in March this year.

For further information on Babergh's Affordable Housing Programme – whether you are interested in affordable rent, shared ownership or are a parish council that would like to try and secure a scheme in your area – please call the number listed on Page 2 of this newsletter.



Babergh's Local Homes Day

An event aimed at giving Parish Councillors an insight into the process of providing affordable housing across Babergh has been hailed a success!

Here Tim Cottrell, Babergh's Housing Enabling Officer, gives a flavour of what the Local Homes for Local People Day, held in April, had to offer.

"The day started with a coach trip around a variety of sites where housing was either completed, at the planning stage or actually under construction.

Representatives of 22 Parish Councils were on board as well as members of Babergh's Housing Panel and the Affordable Housing Team.



From Stoke by Nayland we wound our way through Nayland and Bures to see local needs schemes provided on Babergh land, and then on to Great Cornard where a regeneration project is underway.

The final leg of our journey took us through Monks Eleigh where a small scheme on Babergh land is being planned, to Bildeston where the final phase of a large development has just been completed and finally to Hadleigh where new affordable homes were provided on an open

market site by the application of local planning policy.

The highlights of the afternoon session were the 'from-the-heart' speeches by representatives from Cockfield Parish Council and a resident of the new, affordable housing development in Polstead.

We hope to arrange another day like this in the coming year and we have taken note of the helpful suggestions that have been offered to make the event even better."

Babergh's housing market under the magnifying glass

A draft report detailing the latest research into Babergh's housing market is currently being considered by the affordable housing team.

Babergh - along with all local authorities in England – is required by the government to carry out regular Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA).

The previous requirement was to undertake regular Housing Need Surveys every three to five years in order to assess the housing needs of the District.

A SHMA is a piece of research used to understand the wider housing market issues across all tenures and is looked at together with housing need and demand data.

All types of housing are considered, including social rented housing, intermediate housing (shared equity and other Homebuy options), private rented housing and home ownership.

Babergh joined forces with Ipswich Borough Council and Mid Suffolk and Suffolk Coastal District Councils to commission Fordham Research to carry out the assessment in order the best possible picture is collated.

When complete the SHMA will underpin housing and planning policies for all the local authorities. It will help Babergh decide whether it is encouraging development of the right kind of homes in the right places.

The SHMA is based on statistical information such as census figures, house prices and earnings, as well as housing studies conducted in the past.

For further information please see www.babergh.gov.uk where the findings from the SMHA will be published later this year.

