

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

18 May 2009

Report of the Director of Health and Housing

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Summary

This report updates Members on the progress being made by the Council's Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners in providing new affordable housing in the Borough, and summarises the programmes for 2008/09 and 2009/10.

- 1.1.1 The effective negotiation, planning and delivery of affordable housing forms one of the key priorities of the Council's housing service. Allied to this is the need to track and monitor the progress of RSLs in delivering new schemes. Failure to secure a steady supply of new homes has a direct knock-on effect on the levels of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation or bed and breakfast. Members will be aware that the Council is under a duty not to house homeless families with children in bed and breakfast except in an emergency, and then for a period not exceeding six weeks.
- 1.1.2 While we are dependent on our partners to ensure timely delivery of new housing, the Council also has a role to play in tracking performance. This is important to ensure that any difficulties arising on new schemes are highlighted early on and corrective action taken.
- 1.1.3 Set out at **[Annex 1]** is a monitoring spreadsheet showing the completed schemes in the year to date and the development programme over the next eighteen months. The table identifies:
- the scheme address;
 - RSL provider;
 - start on site (SoS);
 - total number of units to be provided (rent and/or shared ownership);
 - detailed split of rent and shared ownership units;

- the level of grant required for each scheme;
- expected date of completion; and
- information on progress.

1.1.4 Members should be aware that details on some schemes may alter where planning permission has yet to be secured. The number of units to be provided is therefore an indicative figure for strategic purposes, pending confirmation of final scheme details. As new schemes come forward these will be also be added to the schedule.

1.2 Scheme Update Highlights

- 1.2.1 The scheme at Carpenters lane with Hyde Housing that includes 8 affordable units is to complete in July 2009, with the exception of one 3 bed home for rent which will be handed over in December 2009.
- 1.2.2 Moat Housing's New Road scheme in Ditton that includes 29 affordable units is to complete in early 2010.
- 1.2.3 Orbit Group's scheme at Old Cannon's Wharf for 70 affordable units is planned to complete by December this year.
- 1.2.4 The Cabinet Member for Housing was delighted to both attend and speak earlier this month at the opening ceremony for Town & Country Housing Group's Churchfields scheme in Snodland, which comprised 41 affordable homes. The day also offered local Members the opportunity to explore the scheme and closely inspect the newly built homes, and discuss them with the residents.
- 1.2.5 T&CHG were pleased to complete their scheme at Clare Avenue in Tonbridge, for 11 affordable units.
- 1.2.6 T&CHG have submitted a planning application for their Ashby's Yard scheme in Tonbridge town centre, which is adjacent to the River Centre and Old Cannon's Wharf developments. The application which is for a 92 unit scheme is within the area where redevelopment is anticipated (as shown in the Tonbridge Central Area Action Plan). T&CHG are working with the Council to ensure a sustainable and balanced community for this scheme and appropriate for its town centre location.
- 1.2.7 Russet Homes are proceeding with the Hugh Christie site in Tonbridge for 79 dwellings, and are working with the Council to ensure a sustainable and mixed tenure balance for the scheme.
- 1.2.8 The Council is also working with Russet Homes on the project to provide west Kent accommodation for young people at risk, as detailed in a separate report.

1.3 Homes and Communities Agency Funding Allocations

- 1.3.1 Members will be aware that the Housing Corporation moved to a system of Continuous Market Engagement (CME) this year for bids under the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP).

Table 1 – Continuous Market Engagement Allocations

RSL	Tenure	Scheme	No. Units	Grant	Bid Date
Southern Housing	Intermediate Rent	Holborough Valley	40	£1,344,050	March 2009
Moat Homes	Social Rent	New Road Ditton Phase 2	15	£1,171,065	March 2009
Moat Homes	Social Rent	New Road Ditton Phase 1	6	£468,426	March 2009

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 The Council needs to secure a sufficient supply of affordable housing to meet its statutory duties.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 The National Affordable Housing Programme is the means by which public subsidy is secured for the delivery of affordable housing. RSLs must adhere to strict value for money and design considerations imposed by their regulator the Housing Corporation

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 Failure to secure sufficient investment in affordable housing could mean that the Council is unable to deliver its local strategic housing priorities and meet its statutory obligations to the homeless and others in housing need.

Background papers:

contact: Chris Knowles

Nil

John Batty
Director of Health and Housing