

Calder Valley Community Land Trust Newsletter, June 2018

Two letters to put after our name...

Our main news this month is something which we're very pleased about, but where you may struggle a little to appreciate our enthusiasm.

We heard last week that we have been successful in our application to become a 'Registered Provider' – an 'RP'. This is what used to be known as a 'registered social landlord' and what it means is that we will now be able directly to tap into grant funding for affordable homes from Homes England, without having to ask a housing association to help us. We wanted to retain as much control of the homes we will be building locally, and RP status will enable us to achieve this.

It means in particular that we can now immediately start moving on the development at Walsden, which – you may remember – is for six independent living bungalows for older people. We received planning permission for this last autumn and have been impatiently awaiting the RP status to be able to appoint the contractor. Finally, finally, we will have something happening on the ground!

Incidentally, we have been seen as a national test case in regard to becoming an RP. Most Community Land Trusts elsewhere have so far chosen not to go through the extremely rigorous process of assessment, so we are conscious that we are under the spotlight at the moment in this regard. It's good to have come through the process successfully.

Our next public meeting is on Monday July 2nd

We had a very good turn-out for our first public meeting earlier this month; if you were there, we hope you found it informative and stimulating. (We have a number of new readers of this newsletter as a result of people giving us their email addresses – welcome, if you are one of our new readers).

Our next meeting is on **July 2nd (HB Town Hall, 7.30pm)**. Our theme this time is, appropriately enough, **Housing: What can community-led initiatives achieve?** Our speakers are Jo Lavis (from the National CLT Network), Bill Bewley from Keswick's equivalent of our CLT and Steve Hoey from Leeds Community Homes.

The idea that communities themselves can do something to improve things in their neighbourhoods by engaging directly in building new homes is one which is increasingly catching on. We don't just want to have to respond negatively when external developers arrive with their own plans, we want to positively engage with the planning process to achieve the sorts of improvements which the community as a whole wants.

We're now one of over 200 CLTs in Britain. Our public meeting will be an opportunity to be inspired by stories from other towns and cities (some of us saw for ourselves recently the fabulous developments that the CLT in Keswick has brought about, in a tourist town with lots of holiday homes).

Meanwhile, what about the Hebden Bridge development?

Meanwhile, you ask, what's happening about the High Street proposal for Hebden Bridge? Following our flurry of public consultations in April and early May, we went back to the architects, asking them to amend the plans. We wanted in particular to meet neighbours' concerns about the density of houses at the Fox and Goose end of the street.

The plans have been revised, and we are now finalising the planning application documentation which is likely to go in in a fortnight. The revision means that the development will provide twenty affordable homes (compared with the 24+ we had originally hoped for). We will let you know when the planning process has started.

News on the community share issue

We hope that you have read our advance publicity about the community share issue we intend to launch to provide part of the investment for the Hebden Bridge development.

We are inviting local people who are potential investors to let us know at this stage by sending us a (non-binding) 'pledge' of what they expect to be able to invest. So far, we have received pledges from 39 people, mostly (but not exclusively) from the upper Calder valley. (These people receive this newsletter – so a 'thank you' to you all via this medium).

Together these 'pledges' total £155,750, which with the matching funding from Power to Change of £100,000 we mentioned last newsletter means that we are already potentially half-way to our target of £500,000.

These will be investments, not donations, and we anticipate being able to pay interest on the loans when the development is finished. There will be a full launch of the community share issue when we have planning permission for the Hebden Bridge development (we now anticipate the launch being on a Saturday morning in the Autumn). There will also be a detailed prospectus and business plan to explain exactly what we are proposing. (We're working on them now...)

Buddy, can you spare a tweet?

We have our own Twitter account (@cvclt1) and needless to say we publicised our RP status on Twitter when the news came through. Lots of people also tweeted the news or retweeted our messages. This is something we find very helpful, as a way of promoting what we're trying to achieve. If you use Twitter and don't already follow us, perhaps you might like to. And please feel free to retweet our messages as much as you like!