

Calder Valley Community Land Trust September 2017 newsletter

Planning application goes in for Walsden bungalows

We are delighted to be able to let you know that our plans for six bungalows designed for independent living for older people have now been submitted for planning permission. The bungalows are on land at Birks Lane, Walsden, which has been passed into the CLT's ownership by the council.

The proposal is currently being 'validated' by Calderdale (they are checking that all the documentation has been supplied). When it is validated, the full details will be available on the council's planning portal, <https://portal.calderdale.gov.uk/>. (Search under 'Birks Lane' to find everything).

Giving us your support

If you think the proposal is a good idea (and we very much hope you do), **you could help the CLT by formally telling Calderdale via the portal that you support the planning application.** This will be possible as soon as the application is validated and the plans displayed on the website.

Leaflet drop in Walsden: can you help us?

Although we held a well-attended public consultation about the bungalows proposal in Walsden a year ago, we want to ensure that everyone living close to the Birks Lane site is fully aware of our proposals now that we have applied for planning consent.

We have produced a **leaflet which we will be delivering to local houses on Saturday Sep 30th**, starting at 2.30pm. CLT trustees will be there, but could we also ask you if you'd be prepared to come along to, to help us get the leaflets through letter boxes. We envisage that we should be done in little more than an hour.

We will be rendezvousing at the fish and chip shop directly opposite Walsden station prompt at 2.30pm. (Parking possible in nearby streets). If you can join us, ideally let us know in advance at info@caldervalleyclt.org.uk.

What's proposed at Walsden

Our architects, Todmorden-based Storah Architects, have drawn up a little sketch of the bungalows. You'll see that there is a row of five at right-angles to Birks Lane with another one at the top.



We will be directly owning and renting out (at affordable rents) four of the bungalows. The other two will be bought from us by the Todmorden almshouse charity John Eastwood Homes, our partner organisation in this project.

How we'll fund the Walsden development

We have drawn up financial projections for the development, where the capital build costs are funded partly by grant finance and partly by borrowings. The total cost is around £660,000, of which John Eastwood Homes will contribute two-sixths.

We have submitted the necessary forms to apply to the Homes and Communities Agency (soon to be renamed Homes England) for grant funding under the government's Affordable Homes Programme. This also involves us applying to become formally a 'Registered Provider' of 'social housing'. We hope the HCA will grant-fund a significant amount of the remaining £440,000 which the CLT will have to find.

We have had detailed discussions with the ethical bank Triodos about borrowing around £190,000 from them (effectively as mortgage loans) towards the total costs. We have also been awarded a £40,000 grant from Calderdale council, in exchange for nomination rights for two of the bungalows. We are in discussions with the Quaker Housing Trust as well.

Going green

We have discussed how we can make the Walsden development as 'green' as possible, and have prepared a Sustainability Action plan for the development. As this is our first development, we can't finance all the innovations which ideally we'd like to do, but we have looked in detail at what is feasible. There will be PV panels on the main (south-facing) roof line, and we will also be avoiding concrete in the car parking area, using 'grasscrete' blocks or something similar. We also will be ensuring the bungalows have extra insulation.

Meanwhile what about Hebden Bridge?

We had a real flurry of activity around the proposed development at Hebden Bridge (at the High Street site off Heptonstall Road) in the Spring. Full reports of the two public consultations we held then are up on our website (www.caldervalleyclt.org.uk), where you'll also find the latest architects' drawings.

Since the Spring, there has been a slight hiatus while we found the funds to commission a small number of remaining surveys necessary for our planning application. We hope to be ready to progress to planning in late 2017 or early 2018.

Because of our proposals for High Street, this land has been shown in the draft Local Plan from Calderdale as potentially available for housing. (Remember that the Local Plan is a strategic document to propose where developments could take place: it doesn't mean that housing will inevitably take place, and it doesn't negate the need for any developers – including us! - to get planning permission).

An investment opportunity for some of your savings

If you came to our 2016 AGM, you will know that we discussed then the possibility of raising investment funds from within the community for the High Street development. As a legally-registered Community Benefit Society we have the legal powers to launch a Community Share Issue, and our current thinking is that this is something we want to do when we are ready to progress the Hebden Bridge development. Investors become shareholders and members of the CLT (all members have one vote!). We anticipate the community shares being interest-bearing once the development is complete.

Much more news later on, but bear in mind that there may well be an opportunity for you to invest a little of your savings directly into property in the upper valley next year!

Other things we're investigating

As well as our commitment to creating affordable homes to rent in our valley, we are also a legal vehicle with charitable status which can hold land and assets in perpetuity for the benefit of the community. (We are already the land-owner of the Fielden Hall community centre in Todmorden, of course).

A number of local organisations and individuals have been talking to us recently about other local buildings/land where the CLT might potentially be able to play a role as the legal custodian. Nothing agreed yet, but we will keep you posted.

Getting in touch

Andrew Bibby is our secretary, on 01422 844026, info@caldervalley.org.uk. Our website is regularly updated, at www.caldervalleyclt.org.uk