

Newsletter January 2021

This newsletter is going for the first time to 78 new investors, who contributed to our Fielden Acre share issue. A warm welcome to them.

Successful conclusion to share issue

We are absolutely delighted to be able to report that we reached the maximum target of £270,000 in our community share issue early in January, and the issue closed two weeks early.

This is a wonderful response. About 120 individuals living locally (and not-so-locally) have entrusted us with their savings. We also acknowledge the investments from Todmorden Town Council and from Co-operatives UK (the latter via the BOOSTER programme). Thank you all.

New investors become CVCLT members

Our 78 new investors join our 169 existing CLT members so we now have 247 members of our community benefit society. 42 existing CLT members also invested.

Investors, stand by for share certificates!

We have only just received the full list of investors from Ethex and are still awaiting further information from them. We will be sending an email to all investors as soon as we get this, with your share certificate and other important information. Please look out for this email arriving. It will be in the next few days.

Celebratory social

We feel we have to celebrate the end of the community share issue in a suitably enjoyable way, even if it will have to be by zoom.

We have arranged a social event for CLT members and investors from 7pm – 8pm on Tuesday March 16. The full programme is still being arranged, but we can promise a not-to-be-missed magic show (yes, online, by zoom!) from Pete Heat, www.peteheat.co.uk. The singer-songwriter Danny Malone (a Tod lad who has now achieved national attention for his perceptive songs) will also participate.

We will email CLT members/investors shortly, inviting you to book your place.

Progressing the Fielden Acre project

We now have formal confirmation of our other two finance sources for the purchase of the Fielden Acre buildings and land (a grant from Homes England and a low-interest loan from the Community Foundation for Calderdale). We are working to a provisional date for the completion of the purchase at the very start of March.

Walsden bungalows approach first birthday

The bungalows in Walsden were completed in February last year, so our residents are approaching the anniversary of the time when they moved in. We were pleased to be able to drop in a 90th birthday card to one of the residents just before Christmas!

Todmorden update

We've mentioned before that the CLT was identified by Calderdale's Cabinet last year as a suitable organisation for the development of affordable housing on the Rose Street site in central Todmorden (the old health centre site), and we understand that the housing proposal is now included in the Todmorden Town Fund £25m bid to central government, along with several other really exciting community-based proposals for the town's regeneration. (They include for example the TLC initiative for the old community college and the Bandstand group, as well as further work to the Fielden Acre itself).

Because the Rose Street development is potentially a sizeable one, the CLT has decided that it will progress it, on a joint basis, with our friends in Connect Housing, a well-regarded housing association operating locally. Assuming central government approves the Town Fund bid, we anticipate detailed planning work during the rest of 2021 and into 2022. More news when things have developed further.

And meanwhile in Hebden Bridge

Yes, meanwhile in Hebden Bridge we have been looking once again at the old High Street site off the Heptonstall Road, to see if we can bring forward a new planning application for homes which (a) will be exemplary in terms of sustainability (b) will be further away from busy Bridge Lanes (c) will be houses which enhance the town's landscape and heritage and – always key – (d) can be built to a financially viable business plan. Early in January some initial trench-digging took place on site, to check ground conditions. Since a High Street development would also potentially be a sizeable one, here too we plan to partner with Connect Housing.

Have you forgotten HB Signal Box?

We haven't. We are still keen to negotiate the asset transfer of the Grade II listed (but decommissioned) signal box from Network Rail. The negotiations have been held up directly because of covid-19, when frustratingly we were unable to progress the main grant application we have been working on for the box. Hopefully we'll be able to progress things more quickly during 2021.

A reminder

Anyone who supports the aims of our CLT is welcome to join as a member of the Trust, and your membership share comes in exchange for a share costing a minimum of just £1. If you're not a member yet, please make it a new year resolution to join us. (You'll also get an invite to that magic & music show!). Just go to <https://caldervalleyclt.org.uk/get-involved/>.

Remembering Robin

We are sorry to report the sad news of the death of CVCLT member Robin Dixon, one of our earliest members and a keen supporter of our work. Robin, a former councillor and Mayor of Hebden Royd Town Council, contributed much to community life.