

Media release
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Community-led charity to receive National Lottery support

The work of an innovative Calderdale community-led charity is to receive an enormous boost following the announcement this week of £85,000 grant-funding from The National Lottery Community Fund.

Calder Valley Community Land Trust is a community benefit society based in the upper Calder valley towns of Todmorden and Hebden Bridge. First set up in 2014, the Trust has been responsible for the construction of six new independent-living bungalows in Walsden and is also the legal custodian of Todmorden's Fielden Hall community centre. It has just successfully completed a major community share issue to enable it to buy the Fielden Acre buildings and land next door to the Fielden Hall.

Simon Brearley, Chair of Calder Valley Community Land Trust, said: "We're absolutely delighted at the news that the National Lottery will support our work. Our Community Land Trust is trying to demonstrate a simple idea: that by coming together on a voluntary basis, local communities can directly bring about new affordable homes that meet real local needs. And of course we also hold significant local buildings on behalf of the community."

The Trust has been entirely volunteer-led since its inception. Over 250 people are members of the organisation, and the members elect the eleven trustees who oversee the day-to-day work of the charity. The National Lottery Community Fund support, which is spread over the next three years, will enable the Trust to move to the next stage of its development by recruiting a full-time project officer. The grant comes from the Reaching Communities programme.

Simon Brearley added: "The National Lottery news comes at the perfect time for us. As trustees we've been exceptionally busy recently, not only overseeing the Fielden Acre share issue but also working up proposals for new affordable homes in both Todmorden and Hebden Bridge. We're also talking with Network Rail about plans

for the disused heritage signal box in Hebden Bridge to pass across to our custodianship.”

Membership of the Trust has recently increased dramatically and Simon says that membership is open to all locally who support the organisation’s aims, in exchange for a £1 share. Full details are on the website www.caldervalleyclt.org.uk.

