

Special General Meeting: Wednesday 4th June 2014

Directors' Report

The Powerstock & District Community Land Trust was established in December 2013 and the first members joined following the Public Meeting held on 22nd January 2014. Since that date there has been a steady flow of membership applications and the membership currently stands at the very healthy total of 55. This Special General Meeting provides the membership with the first opportunity to democratically elect the Directors of the CLT.

The CLT's Advisors

The Trust has been fortunate in having the advice and support of the Wessex Community Land Trust Project and the West Dorset District Council Planning Department's Housing Enabling Team and I would like to take this opportunity to record the Director's thanks to them.

Grants Received by the CLT

Two grants have been received by the Trust to assist towards costs associated with reaching the planning application stage for the proposed affordable housing project. We have received £5,000 from West Dorset District Council to pay for legal fees and just over £31,000 from the Housing & Communities Agency towards initial architectural design and site survey fees.

Partnership with Hastoe Housing Association

The CLT has joined in partnership Hastoe Housing Association to build and manage the affordable homes. We selected Hastoe because of their experience in developing small sensitive sites in rural locations and to date this has proved to be an excellent choice. Hastoe's team regularly attend our Affordable Housing Steering Group Meetings to offer the benefit of their experience, but are happy to allow the CLT to take the lead in decision making. Hastoe's major role in the partnership is to secure government funding to build the homes and then to maintain the properties and manage tenancy arrangements on an on-going basis. Hastoe have included the Forge scheme in their current round of bids and they are hoping to hear that they have been successful by July or August this year.

Progress on Land Purchase

At our last Public Meeting on 22nd January 2014 the Trust was given overwhelming support to proceed with due diligence and design work for the affordable housing project on the Forge Site in Powerstock. At that time we had already agreed Heads of Terms for the sale of the land with the owner. The land is owned by a Trust set up under the will of the late Admiral Sir Victor Crutchley V.C. We are now in the process of agreeing a three way Option Agreement between the Landowner, Hastoe and the CLT which we anticipate will be finalised shortly. We are also fortunate in having a great deal of support from Victor Crutchley who attends our meetings by invitation and has done a lot of work to help us prepare the site for the initial survey work.

Progress since the Public Meeting

Since the Public Meeting we have been out to tender and appointed specialists to undertake, initial ecological, topographical, ground condition, tree surveys, cost advice and architectural design to planning application stage. To date we have received the initial ecological report and the topographical survey. The ecological survey confirms that there is evidence of reptiles and dormice on site and special arrangements to protect them and at the appropriate stage; remove them from site, will need to be made. Surveys are an expensive business and the HCA Grant is not quite sufficient to meet all these costs and give us sufficient room for manoeuvre, we are therefore grateful to our partners, Hastoe, for their offer to take financial responsibility for engineering advice and a preliminary archaeological report.

Selection of Architect

Our chosen Architect is Adrian Morris, from Etchingham Morris, a small firm based at Ringwood. We have provided Adrian with a written brief, history of the site and tour of some of the local farm developments and the distant view of the site from King John's Castle. As soon as the Steering Group feel that an outline design has been produced that can be supported, a drop-in consultation session will be arranged on the design for the whole community

to express its views. We are hoping this can take place by late summer and are aiming to submit a formal planning application by the end of the year.

Future Work

The next major piece of work is to negotiate the Section 106 Agreement with West Dorset District Council. This, in essence, is agreeing the selection criteria for the people who are eligible to live in the homes. Whilst the three main eligibility criteria are already set, i.e. domicile , employed and/or close family connection in the area, the 'devil is in the detail' as they say and we must give this careful thought and get the agreement of the local authority to our allocation proposals. The job of assessing individuals and families against these criteria will be carried out by Hastoe Housing Associaton.

A copy of this report will be made available to Members with the Minutes of the Special General Meeting.

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