

## Collaborative Housing Press Release

### ***New affordable homes for local people – community groups lead the way***

Three Oxfordshire community groups are celebrating significant milestones towards developing new affordable homes. With building works due to start in early 2022, Thame Community Land Trust, Oxfordshire Community Land Trust and Hook Norton Community Land Trust will provide 51 homes for local people. This vital new housing will allow people in housing need to stay in their home communities.

Fiona Brown from Collaborative Housing, which has provided support and advice to the groups leading these developments, says, 'it is just wonderful to see the plans of these groups turning into homes on the ground. It proves that with hard work and dedication community volunteers can come together and provide much-needed homes for people in their local communities. They are an inspiration!'

Thame CLT has received a positive planning decision for 31 affordable homes on land west of Windmill Road, Thame. The development will be a mix of maisonettes, 2-bedroom houses and 3-bedroom houses. They have been designed to a high environmental standard and will be available as affordable rent or discounted market sale. The next stage of the project is being supported by a grant from the government's Community-Led Housing Fund.

Hook Norton CLT has been granted permission for 12 homes. Responding to the climate emergency is a key feature of the development - a micro-grid will provide a decentralised system of locally-generated energy, allowing the community to be more energy independent and climate friendly. Hook Norton's innovative work now has countrywide recognition – the group has just won The National Community Land Trust's Sustainability Award 2021.

Oxfordshire CLT will be building eight homes for affordable rent at Dean Court, Botley (Oxford). This is culmination of a lot of hard work by one of the leading lights in the community-led housing world in the South East. The group has also just been registered as a provider of social housing by the Social Housing Regulator which allows them to directly receive affordable housing grant and to own and manage homes for social rent.

Many people in Oxfordshire do not have access to good quality, secure and affordable housing. While lots of housing development is underway, owning a new home will remain largely out of reach for many. This is particularly the case for younger people, single-person households and households earning an average income. Rental costs are also expensive and rising.

Community-led housing of the type delivered by Thame, Hook Norton and Oxfordshire CLTs directly tackles these problems. Local people are meaningfully involved throughout the process, there is a long-term interest for the community in the homes, and the local area benefits from the development in perpetuity. Homes developed in this way create stronger places and more eco-friendly, affordable homes.

Collaborative Housing was established in 2019 to help community groups which wish to undertake developments to meet locally-identified housing needs. It aims to support the development of a

pipeline of projects across the Thames Valley, transforming how we think about and provide new housing by putting local people in the driving seat.

## **Notes to editors**

### **Contact**

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### **More information**

[Collaborative Housing](#) is the support service for community-led housing groups in the Thames valley. From co-housing and community land trusts to co-operative and self-help housing, we support all kinds of community-led approaches. The benefits are many, from genuinely affordable homes to more cohesive communities, improved well-being and tackling the climate emergency. We provide hands-on advice, from exploring the possibilities through to the practicalities of funding, design, and planning. Collaborative Housing is hosted by [Community First Oxfordshire](#), a community development charity.