

Community Led Housing — Get Inspired

Heron Educational Foundation, Humbleton — From school to housing



Background

Humbleton is a small village of around 200 people, just north of Hull in East Riding. Residents either work locally in agriculture or commute into Hull. On the Index of Multiple Deprivation it is in the lower half of communities nationally and in the bottom 2% for housing.

Founded in 1718, the Heron Educational Foundation seeks to provide funding and grants to help support children and young people through education and into employment. They were able to raise money through the renting of a local farm, but never quite enough to meet all of their aims. Since the 19th century they have owned the village school and surrounding land. The school closed in 1959 and started falling into disrepair.

The charity made the bold decision of selling up the farm and looked into converting the school and building on the surrounding land to create affordable housing to help raise more money and support people in the village.

Getting started

The sale of the farm provided a great kick-start of funds, reserving £465,000 for the cost of the build, hopefully covering around 50%, if not more, of the costs.

The charity was able to access the local council's Community Housing Fund to get a key grant of £40,000 to help cover around 40% of the planning stage costs.

The charity are currently in further negotiations to get more help and funding from the council to put towards the build, hoping to cover 35% of the £950,000 estimated cost.

The remaining cost is intended to be funded by bank loans and Commuted Sums; money paid by developers to ensure sufficient affordable homes are built within the council area.

The village created a Community-led Plan in 2018 (updated 2019) which showed that residents recognised the need for affordable housing and also wanted the school renovated.

Community led housing

With the help of an architect, plans were drawn up to convert the school house into three two-

bed homes, providing much needed smaller and affordable homes for first time renters. Further discussions with the council and local community helped draw up plans to build two additional three-bed homes on the school grounds and a refurbishment of the school master's house to produce six affordable rented properties altogether. Through active work of an appointed project manager and charity trustees, designs were created to reflect the same style as the current buildings within the village. The hope is to revitalise the south end of the village with these new properties and ensure they are incorporated within the area. Other members of the charity and village have been instrumental as a sounding board to provide advice at key stages, helping to sign off the designs and apply for planning permission in March 2020. Using 'entry level' exception criteria for the new builds, planning permission was granted in February 2021. The project was sent out to tender in June 2021 and a contractor was decided in August 2021. Work will begin on site in September 2021 with the hope the project



Inside the school

"It is important to us because it's our village. We're not building remotely. We're not dealing with someone else's town or project. It's our village, it's been our building for a long time and now is our opportunity to sort that out and get ourselves into the 21st century and back into our roots, helping people get through the education process."

Chris Brazier, Treasurer

will be completed and ready for tenants to move in by April 2022.

Community impact

The community have been extremely supportive. They are excited to see the school back in productive use and see that end of the village revitalised.

The community and the charity have been working together for years anyway and 'without their support we would have gone nowhere' said Chris Brazier, charity trustee.

The village is excited about the addition of affordable housing within the community, enabling people to stay in the village they grew up in, and are supporting the charity to achieve this.

What does the future look like?

The charity are excited for the project to be finished and their dream to be realised. They hope that the revenue from the houses will enable them to provide bigger grants and help more people through their education and into employment. They hope to be able to make a real difference to the people of their village through the grants, housing provision and, in the future, the building of a community centre.



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For inspiration, information and advice with your community led housing project, contact Community Led Homes North Yorkshire & East Riding:

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