

Community Led Housing — Get Inspired

Hudswell, Richmondshire — New housing



Background

Hudswell is a small village of around 250 people, just outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park in Swaledale.

The Hudswell Community Charity was founded in the 17th century to help those in poverty in the local area. The charity owned three affordable rented cottages and 30 acres of farmland, and saw an opportunity to develop further affordable homes on the land. They wanted to make the best use of their assets to help provide for local people and, along with others in the village who had experience of community led projects, help save the local pub and bring it under community ownership.

Getting started

Using reserves from property rent and with the help of both Yorkshire Dales National Park and Richmondshire's Rural Housing Enabler, the charity was able to carry out a housing needs survey, identifying the need for affordable rented dwellings within the area. With the help of a £10,000 grant from Locality, the charity was able to begin drawing up plans and apply

for planning permission.

The charity had access to £80,000 in reserves from their other rented assets, which attracted other funding and allowed them to secure a £250,000 loan from the Charity Bank to cover the bulk of the build. A £40,000 grant from Richmondshire District Council Community Housing Fund made up the rest of the funds to help cover the solar panel costs for the roof. With all this available funding, work was able to begin quickly.

A local architect that lived in the village helped draw up some initial plans and designs for a reduced rate, meaning the process could begin quickly and kept additional costs down.

Community led housing

The charity was keen to engage regularly with the community, organising meetings to update people with changes and help meet concerns over the design look and aesthetic of the buildings. Eventually a design was agreed on and two three-bed bungalows and one two-bed were granted planning permission.

After consulting with six local companies, the team chose one that was competitively priced and had plenty of experience to suit their needs, and work began in March 2016. The houses were completed in November 2017, the first tenants moving in straight away.

Community impact

The project wanted to ensure that people with a local connection who couldn't afford to live in the local area could have a home, as well as being able to maintain these properties at an affordable rate for the future.

The new housing has been rented out to people in real need. Two young families were able to move in who had parents living in the village, but had been previously priced out. One family were living on the south coast in completely unsuitable accommodation with a young baby. The new housing meant they could relocate near family and have much more room and even a garden!

The third property has been rented twice now, both times to an older resident who could then



The Hudswell scheme opens, with Rishi Sunak MP

"We felt that this new housing scheme was the best use we could make of the charity's assets. We knew that there were people with strong connections to the village that could not afford to buy a home here. We had seen a previous attempt to provide so-called affordable houses fail, because they were simply sold on at the market price a few years later. We were determined that we would provide homes for rent at a truly affordable price that would be available to local people for generations to come." **Martin Booth**

access the support of close family who lived locally.

The scheme really has put housing need, local residents and connections first, helping those in great housing need gain a home of their own and family support that just was not possible before.

What does the future look like?

The charity continues to maintain control of the properties and ensure that they are well managed. They wish to provide more housing for local need, to continue to help the village thrive and be sustainable.

Their next project is looking at remodelling the local church which has been closed for several years. While not suitable for housing, the charity has just applied for planning permission to convert it into a local hostel for walkers, which will hopefully boost tourism and local business.

The charity still own some other land which they are hoping in the future to build more social housing on. A survey has suggested this would be well received and there is still a great need for more affordable housing so the charity is looking ahead to build here.



Community
Led Homes
North Yorkshire
& East Riding

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

www.communityledhomesnyer.org.uk

clh@communityfirstyorkshire.org.uk