

What's Your Vision for Community Housing in Hook Norton?

Your Help Needed

Would you like to live in a warm, light home that is sustainable, low carbon and actually affordable to buy or rent right here in Hooky? With your help it could happen. Please come to one of the two Open Community Housing Meetings planned for the end of February to explore what might be possible and express your ideas and thoughts on what you would like to see happen.

It's clear that a new approach to housing is needed - a grass roots approach that springs directly from the ideas and needs of the local community. Housing costs have spiralled out of control resulting in homes becoming increasingly unaffordable and out of reach for many, but especially low income households. The rising cost of land and pressure on land supply have helped to fuel the increased cost of building homes, but what if an alternative project that worked for the benefit of the community rather than the developer could be explored?

The community of Hook Norton has a rare and unusual opportunity to participate in an affordable and imaginative housing project using a piece of land in the village owned by Cherwell District Council. The council are prepared to transfer ownership of the land to the community by forming a Community Land Trust and this could be one way of achieving affordability, as the value of the land and developer's high profit margin would be removed from the cost of the homes. The proposed site does not add to the outward spread of the village but would make good use of a neglected and overgrown piece of land near to the Sports and Social Club. The site is compact and could be integrated into the surrounding neighbourhood by creative landscaping and planting.

It could be possible to design homes that foster a stronger community spirit and encourage social contact. A different way of living could be offered with access to shared spaces such as communal gardens and allotments that could enable neighbours to support each other and decrease the sense of isolation often experienced by many elderly people. Lots of us would also welcome the chance to live in a home that has a kinder relationship to the environment with inventive use of local shared energy sources to allow communities to be more energy independent and cut costs. Renewable elements such as PV solar panels and thoughtful

design and insulation could be intrinsic to the development along with low carbon transport options such as shared electric cars and E bikes included.

It's important that this community housing project really reflects your views so we will be working with an independent survey company over the coming months to ask what you would like to see the project provide for the village. Look out for our forthcoming questionnaire and pop up events but meantime please come to one of the Open Community Housing Meetings to make the most of this fantastic opportunity to deliver the kind of Community Housing the village needs and wants.

Affordable, sustainable, well designed housing can be transformative and enhance the lives and well being of its occupants. It can make us all happy and it could start right here in Hooky.

Dates and Times of Meetings:

**Tuesday February 20th at Hook Norton Brewery at 7.30pm
and**

**Saturday February 24th at Hook Norton Sports and Social Club at
2pm**

Cathy Ryan, Tim Lunel

Community Engagement and Feasibility Study Project Managers

