



Providing Truly Affordable Housing for Local People



Photograph © Judy Dean

Member of The National Community Land Trust Network Generously sponsored by Stow Town Council
The registered office of Stow-on-the-Wold Community Land Trust is:
c/o William Hinton, Chartered Accountants and Business Consultants, Ross House, The Square,
Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, GL54 1AF FCA Reference Number 7531

www.stowclt.org.uk



Message from the Chairman,

Stow-on-the-Wold Community Land Trust is seeking to provide truly affordable housing for local people who live or work in Stow.

All property is owned in perpetuity on behalf of the community.

We are circulating local landowners and property-owners who might wish to work with us, and this document explains how, and the advantages of doing so.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Minty".

Peter Minty
Chairman, Stow-on-the-Wold Community Land Trust



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INTRODUCTION – THE ISSUE AND THE NEED

We are fortunate to live in Stow-on-the-Wold (“Stow”), an historic town in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with renowned agricultural heritage and a vibrant tourist industry. However, the sustainability of our town is affected by a serious lack of truly affordable housing (“TAH”) which is accessible to local people in Stow on low to moderate incomes.

In addition, whilst Stow has developed as an outstanding and desirable place to live, both for families and for older residents with an increased number of care homes, this has happened without the attendant development of accommodation for key workers. *(See Appendix 1)*

Any community such as ours is heavily reliant on the ability to attract and retain key workers across a whole range of areas such as carers, teachers, nurses, cleaners and repair and maintenance workers.

In the context of constantly increasing land and accommodation prices, these workers have been priced out of accommodation in Stow and many therefore look to move elsewhere to lower cost areas.

The result is that our community is deprived of the necessary resources needed and, compared with the normal young/middle-aged/older generation demographics, has now become imbalanced.

The estimate of the exact need for TAH depends upon the criteria applied. The most recent Housing Needs Survey for Stow (2015) indicated a need for 27 truly affordable units. This estimate, however, has been updated to approximately 40 housing units to take account of the current demand for TAH based on local housing applications, and demographic considerations.

We have also experienced unintended consequences of this unfulfilled need for TAH due to a proliferation of full market value commercial housing developments in the area, some of which include the provision of Affordable Rented Housing units (at 80% of market value).

However, in high market value areas such as Stow, the attendant affordable housing provision is not affordable to many local residents on low incomes. These developments, in addition to increasing the demand for key workers, often fail to deliver even the limited TAH results initially envisaged.



BACKGROUND TO STOW COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (“STOW CLT”)

Stow CLT has been established as a not-for-profit Community Benefit Society charitable organisation and is a member of the National Community Land Trust Network. Any property it owns is held in perpetuity for the benefit of the community. This enables local people to develop and manage truly affordable housing which will be rented or purchased at a price that local people can afford and will be below the market rate.

Stow CLT’s principal objective is to tackle the need for TAH head-on, prioritising local people, key workers and the rural skills sector to safeguard the future social and economic well-being of Stow.

Stow CLT’s special status unlocks a range of potential Government funding support. Additionally, the Cotswold District Council (CDC) Planning Department will provide pre-application planning advice free of charge for CLT schemes for all-affordable housing projects.

Further sources of funding and co-operation are also available from Stow Town Council (STC) together with access to a wide range of financial and legal advice provided by the National CLT Network.

As Stow CLT’s mandate is to deliver all-affordable housing schemes to meet Stow’s identified local community housing needs, we are able to consider ‘exception’ sites outside the development boundary, which would not otherwise be considered for commercial residential development.

Stow CLT’s charitable status also enables it to enjoy a degree of influence in tailoring its allocations policy to meet Stow’s particular housing needs by prioritising people with local connections and those who play a pivotal role in safeguarding the social and economic wellbeing of Stow. *(See Appendix 1).*

Stow CLT is now ready for the next stage - to build its first development - but, to achieve this we need development land/ premises, funding loans, investments, and gifts.



CONCEPT

The **concept** supported by Stow CLT is to begin by building a small, best in class, energy-efficient development of truly affordable housing in or close to Stow. The land and/or premises would ideally be gifted or bought for a reasonable price (but potentially at a premium to agricultural value) while keeping the overall development cost to a minimum. As previously outlined, CDC has confirmed that “exception site” status would be granted to Stow CLT for the right TAH proposal.

As mentioned earlier, one of the biggest constraints is the high cost of development land in or near Stow. We are therefore considering a whole range of options, including conversion of current agricultural land to “exception site” status for the building of TAH, or possibly partnering with existing businesses or care facilities to accommodate the required key workers.

The availability of the land on which to build will in turn unlock available funds from CDC and elsewhere to support the build.



BENEFITS TO STOW

The **benefits to our community are both tangible and intangible, including:**

- **creating** a sustainable economy where local people and their families are valued and therefore stay
- **retaining** valuable talents of key workers, craftsmen, rural skills sector
- **ensuring** proper care and support for our residents, and in particular young families and older residents
- **ensuring** our community continues to be diverse and reflects a broad spectrum of our society
- **achieving** greater efficiency and sustainability of staffing for care homes and other businesses
- **achieving** a reputation for our community as one that cares for its people, and one that recognises community support and involvement
- **retaining** younger, Stow-born residents and their families, thereby reinforcing and enhancing our demographics.



HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED

We believe that our plans will only take root and succeed by a collaborative effort involving local supporters, businesses and landowners working together with Stow CLT and the local authorities.

There are many different ways in which people can become involved, including:

- Considering the donation or economic sale of land and/or premises to Stow CLT to be used to provide truly affordable housing
- The making of key gifts or donations to Stow CLT to enable us to expand our work
- To consider creating TAH opportunities with existing care homes or other businesses in the area
- Legacies in favour of Stow CLT, bequeathing either assets or land
- Pro bono services, including design, legal, accounting, building and fit-out work

In return for such involvement, there are a whole range of benefits, including:

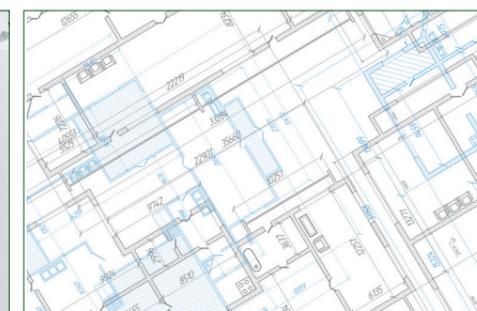
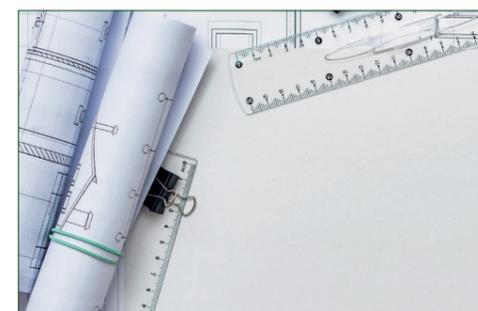
- Donors will be making a real and acknowledged contribution to our local society
- Tax and Gift Aid benefits will be available for charitable contributions
- Sellers of land may achieve a planning uplift to its value, while still selling it to Stow CLT at an affordable price
- Provision of accommodation for essential key workers will, in the case of co-operative partnering projects, achieve a greater degree of efficiency and sustainability of staffing through loyalty and continuity
- Naming rights will be available for significant donations or contributions
- If funds are raised by Stow CLT through a Community Share Issue, this would provide the opportunity for an investment return.

INITIAL DISCUSSIONS

Stow CLT is approaching potentially interested parties to open discussions about obtaining possible sites, funding and support.

Further details can be provided about Stow CLT, its vision, governance and constitution, its objectives and management.

This paper will be expanded upon in discussion, with additional information being provided for interested parties.



APPENDIX 1 - LIST OF KEY WORKERS

Below is a list of some of the key workers who contribute to essential aspects of our life and our economy in Stow:-

Maintaining the Cotswold built heritage -Skilled craftsmen, plumbers, roofers, glaziers, electricians, thatchers, joiners, restorers, blacksmiths, stonemasons, decorators, plasterers, chimney sweeps, gardeners, handymen

Maintaining Cotswold farming and agriculture - Agricultural workers, shepherding, husbandry, mechanics, tree surgeons, stone wallers, veterinary assistants

Maintaining the health and well-being of our local community - Nurses, junior doctors, care workers, social workers, chemists and dental assistants

Maintaining the range of local services - Junior civil servants, librarians, youth workers, local transport workers, police, fire & rescue servicemen, waste disposal operatives, junior planners, builders, highways, local housing maintenance workers, pipe and drainage workers

Maintaining the principal tourism industry - Hotel and restaurant staff, coach drivers, cleaners, serving staff, cooks, retail assistants, shop workers

Maintaining charities, churches and care bodies - Wardens, palliative care workers, personnel helping children, the elderly, the disabled, the bereaved, disadvantaged, former service men and women, animals

Maintaining education services - Teachers, administrators, school meal workers, cleaners, classroom assistants, office staff

APPENDIX 2 - EXAMPLE HOUSING CONCEPT DESIGN

In line with the primary policy to cater for Stow's particular mix of housing needs, our design concept mirrors this by encompassing variety.

As previously indicated, our concept is to plan and build small, best in class, energy-efficient TAH developments in addition to 1, 2 and 3 bed apartments, in or close to Stow, and as shown below, to blend in with Stow's historic Cotswold architectural style and character.



We are also looking forward to fulfilling our broader vision of creating larger developments, by converting existing light industrial and/or redundant farm buildings. Aside from delivering standard housing units, such projects could also include live/work and small workshop/studio units to encourage 'makers and menders' to live and work in our area.





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