



**MCLT Consultation meeting July 21st 2018
Marshfield Community Centre Small Hall 12.00noon**

Background to development of MCLT and its site search

MCLT Governance and membership

- MCLT is a not- for-private - profit, community benefit society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority.
- CLTs can own land and other assets which are of benefit and important to the community and then are held in perpetuity for the community.
- Most CLTs have started with securing affordable housing for people and families with a local connection but also explore other community benefits.
- CLTs aims to ensure that local people remain in control of local assets.
- CLTs develop and manage these assets in partnership with e.g. Housing Associations to ensure their long-term sustainability.
- MCLT is open to membership to all supporting its aims and agree to the ways of working set out by the Rules and the MCLT standing orders.
- Membership of MCLT is by purchase of shares at £1 each.
- The MCLT is managed by a Board of Directors elected by members and accountable to its members¹.

Why a CLT was set up in Marshfield

The catalyst was the serious divisions within the Marshfield community revealed due to a developer wanting to erect 37 houses following a Housing Need Survey which indicated a considerable level of affordable housing need in Marshfield².

There was a strong negative reaction that can be summarised thus;

- the scheme was too big;
- it would spoil the local landscape; and,
- people of the village did not want any more market development but support for affordable housing for people with local connections.

At an informal meeting the scheme was voted against by large majority & a petition against the development was signed by 500 people.

The developer withdrew leaving the affordable housing problem unresolved.

This led to emergence of Marshfield CLT.

¹ See MCLT website for more detail on CLTs <http://marshfieldclt.org/>

Also Wessex Community Land Trust Project that supports 40 CLTs across the south west
<https://wessexca.co.uk/wessex-clt-project/projects/>

² Housing Need Survey 2013

<http://marshfieldclt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Marshfield-housing-needs-survey-report-final.pdf>



Emergence of MCLT

Wessex CLT Project were approached and an introductory meeting with Parish Councillors and other interested parties held. Over 70 people attended a public meeting to launch a CLT project chaired by the Chairman of the Parish Council. More than 70 people attended.

The meeting set up a steering committee of 15 people to take things forward.

By July 2016 we had;

- set up Marshfield CLT as a Community Benefit Society under Financial Services Agency signing up to the Rules under the Cooperative Act 2014;
- established a board of directors;
- gained the active support of the Parish Council and District Councillors;
- canvassed for support locally and gained more than 155 members/shareholders; and,
- agreed that first project would be to develop affordable housing and began search for sites³.

CLTs and rural exception sites

MCLT Wanted a site for shared ownership and properties for rent to meet the need identified in the 2013 Housing Need survey which reported:

“there is a realistic demand for shared ownership in the parish but affordable rented homes are the tenure most likely to meet long term, local need in the village.”

This conclusion was based on the information given about the type and size of housing needed and the mortgage capacity of respondents rather than their wants and aspirations.

We hoped that finding a site would be helped by the fact that national and local policy allows affordable housing to be developed on **rural exception sites** which would not usually be granted planning permission such as green belt and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty because of planning policy constraints.⁴

³ Reflects concerns such as that expressed by the Rural Coalition Report 2107:

- “Across rural England there is a severe and growing shortage of affordable housing for local people. Many areas are turning into enclaves of the affluent”.

⁴ SGC Exception sites

Affordable Housing can also be developed on land which is well related to a rural settlement through the Council’s exception site policy (CS19). This allows building which would not usually be granted planning permission because of planning policy constraints. A small proportion of market housing may be included to assist in delivering a viable scheme.

This type of development can be justified where it meets an identified housing need, has the support of the appropriate Parish Council and the development is modest in scale and in keeping with the form and character of the settlement and local landscape setting. (2018: p3 South Gloucestershire Council’s Rural Affordable Housing Statement of Commitment).

See SGC CS19 for more detail <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/housing/supplementary-planning-document/>
<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/AH-ECH-SPD-FINAL-V13-2.6.14-sc-links.pdf>



Legislation states that building in these areas can be permitted where there is a need for affordable housing by people with a local connection - those who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion.

All this seemed to put Marshfield CLT into a good position as we set about finding a rural exception site which could be purchased at a price appropriate for affordable housing.

First site searches phase

Since July 2016, MCLT has looked at a wide range of sites of about 0.75-1.5 acres around and close to Marshfield, initially drawing on South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) criteria which covers aspects such as;

- relationship of proposed sites to the existing settlement;
- highway and pedestrian access and safety;
- environmental factors, such as landscape form and character, flooding, archaeology and historic character, ecology, agricultural land quality etc.; and,
- implications of any relevant planning policy such as Green Belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

We also used our own experience and knowledge to explore factors such as site gradient, the risk to significant views/vistas, negative effects on village gateways, parking, unacceptable volume of traffic within the village, parking implications, effects on existing facilities, impact on utilities & services and the degree to which a site is likely to be broadly supported by the village community.

Using these criteria we identified a group of preferred sites and talked to number of landowners using a cash exchange model but didn't have any success in getting a site. We just couldn't attract interest or address the hope value that SGC might change the settlement boundary.

The MCLT board revised the site selection process as it became clear that we could not secure a site through our initial approach.

Second phase of site search leading to our preferred site

Planning policies on exception sites include the phrase 'related to' so we began to negotiate with land owners whose land is close to the settlement boundary but not adjacent.

We also used the possibility within planning policies which allows a small number of market houses to be built on rural exception sites along with the affordable homes. We agreed to offer a small number of market plots to the land owners in exchange for the land for affordable houses. The same number of market plots would then be used by the CLT to cross subsidise the affordable housing and help get rents to a level which are genuinely affordable. This approach also will provide a mix of tenures and types of housing which is typical of much of Marshfield houses.

No more than a 1/3 of the houses would be market housing. This means on a site suitable for 18 houses, 3 would be market plots for the owner, 3 will be market plots which will cross subsidise the affordable houses and 12 will be affordable housing to include some for rent and some for shared ownership depending in part on what the new housing Need Survey



tells us. Such a development will be subject to SGC policies that take account of environmental considerations including landscape and the impact on the openness of the Green Belt and AONB.

The conversations using our new approach have been successful. We have had 3 owners with interest in working with us and are now bringing you our preferred option.

Who is eligible for the affordable homes

Affordable housing is not just for people wanting to live in Marshfield, they also have to have a housing need. To establish this, the CLT, SGC and the housing association will work together to approve the criteria for allocating the homes. Criteria will cover two key areas:

- how long has a person lived or worked in the village or whether a person has family who have lived in the parish; and,
- whether the information given about the type and size of housing needed and the mortgage capacity of respondents identifies them as being in housing need and eligible for affordable housing.

This will be verified by anyone who wants to be considered for an affordable home needing to register on the SGC Home Choice register.

What happens if the site is supported by the village

The MCLT will secure a grant to carry out a feasibility study which will:

- Identify a housing association for MCLT to work with who will fund, build and manage the homes, taking the development risks and works with SGC to allocate the homes in line with criteria approved by the MCLT;
- appoint surveyors;
- chose an architect who will help design the houses and submit a pre- planning application; and,
- bring the design back to the village for consultation and comments before submitting a planning application.

The MCLT will own the site and lease it to the housing association for 125 years and will receive a small ground rent which will support the running of the MCLT and new projects.