

Media release

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For immediate release

New Marshfield community-led development will create affordable homes for local residents.

A ground-breaking community-led housing development at Marshfield in South Gloucestershire has taken an important step forward to deliver 15 sustainable and affordable homes for local people.

Led by Marshfield Community Land Trust (MCLT), who aim to address the shortage of affordable housing for local people, the homes are the first in South Gloucestershire to be developed under the Rural Exception Site policy. This tackles the challenge of local people being priced out of rural communities by allowing small developments that prioritise homes for local people in housing need.

The development was made possible by local landowner Mike Ball transferring the land to MCLT. The Trust has leased the land to Brighter Places housing association to build and manage the affordable homes and Somerset-based building contractor Winsley White Ltd has been appointed to build the new homes. These significant steps in the project pave the way for construction to start in the spring.

As well as addressing the housing challenge for local people the new affordable homes at Marshfield aim to provide solutions to rising energy costs and the climate emergency. The homes will have air source heat pumps to provide heating and will be built to certified Passivhaus standards ensuring low energy bills for future residents.

South Gloucestershire Council have provided more than £750,000 in funding, from the Developer Contribution Fund and from their Climate Emergency Fund. Homes England supported MCLT through their Community-Led Housing Fund to progress scheme feasibility and the planning application and are contributing £1.3m from the Affordable Homes Programme, plus an additional £78k from the Community Housing Fund.

Christine Eden, Chair of Marshfield Community Land Trust, says, "We are delighted that MCLT has secured the site for our affordable housing scheme. We would not have reached this point without support from South Gloucestershire Council, Homes England, Marshfield Parish Council, the village community, our steadfast MCLT members and particularly our partner, Brighter Places. We have all kept going, despite the many obstacles, because we know that we are fulfilling a real need for affordable homes for local people. It is immensely satisfying and rewarding to see our dream becoming a reality and we hope that others will be encouraged to develop their own community-led housing schemes."

Anna Klimczak, CEO of Brighter Places, said: “As a housing association committed to collaborating with local people and partners to create much-needed, energy efficient affordable homes, we are delighted that Marshfield Community-Led Trust and South Gloucestershire Council are taking this significant step to provide homes for local residents. There is an acute need for affordable housing in rural communities and we are proud to be part of this landmark scheme that will allow current and future generations of local people to continue living in the area in low carbon homes they can afford to run.”

Executive Director of South Gloucestershire Council’s Place Department, Nigel Riglar said, “This project will deliver affordable housing for local people in a beautiful rural area. And it will demonstrate that new build homes can tread lightly in our countryside, with a low carbon footprint, helping us to respond positively to the climate and nature emergencies.”

Winsley-White’s Company Director, Sam Winsley said, “We will shortly be on site to construct this exciting community led development. Having built a number of Passivhaus homes recently we have been impressed by the significant advantages this modern construction method delivers, specifically in reducing the occupier’s costs of running their home. In a world of increasing costs ‘building in’ passive energy cost reductions has to be the moral thing to do. We are a local contractor, who aim to work closely with the Marshfield community to deliver a successful project for all. We look forward to becoming part of the community whilst on site.”

Helen Bone, Senior Manager – Growth, Homes England adds, “We are pleased to see this development moving forward. Funding from the Community-Led Housing Fund and Affordable Homes Programme will support this community-led housing project to provide affordable housing for local people whilst providing solutions to sustainability concerns.”

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Notes to Editors

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- South Gloucestershire council approved planning for the Marshfield site in May 2021.
- Images of the plans can be downloaded: <https://we.tl/t-x5FGtZSGOy>
- There will be five shared ownership homes at the Marshfield housing development. Full details about them are on Brighter Places shared ownership website: <https://bphomes.co.uk/our-developments/marshfield/>

Brighter Places

Brighter Places is Bristol’s largest independent housing association. They manage 3,300 properties across Bristol and the surrounding areas providing homes for over 8,000 people. Their focus is on providing better, community-led high-quality housing as a cornerstone to unlock social, economic and health benefits within communities. Alongside providing general needs social housing and shared ownership homes, Brighter Places deliver new, low carbon, energy efficient affordable homes that residents can afford to run. As part of their Corporate Strategy they aim to deliver 1,000 much-needed affordable homes in Bristol by 2027. Brighter Places was established in 2021 following the merger of United Communities and Solon South-West housing associations. www.brighterplaces.co.uk