

Upper Coly Valley Community Land Trust Ltd

Minutes from the open meeting held on 31st July 2017, 7.30pm

at Northleigh Village Hall

Attending: W. Rich, R. Hare, S. Watson, A. Stevens, C. Worrall, L. Skinner, S. Kastner, Alison Ward, Colin Pike, 18 members of the public.

Apologies: S. Snell, J. Reed, J. Alexander.

1. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting
2. Aims of the meeting: to encourage members to join the CLT, also to find a new board member to join, to reassure the residents that these houses will be for local people or people who work in the villages.
The chairman also said that the overflow car park currently used by Hillside residents will still be there for their use.
The chairman also pointed out that there is no monies gained by the board members and that the CLT is a non - profit organisation.
3. What is a CLT? - this was delivered by a power point by Steve Watson and Alison Ward from Wessex Community Land Trust Project
Questions arising from this: If you don't agree with CLT can you be a member? No you can't as when you sign to agree to be a member it says that you agree with the aims of the CLT.
Is there anything nearby for residents to be able to look at to see what sort of projects you have been involved in? Steve Watson said that he would come to that later on in the presentation, when he got to that point he shared some slides of the project at Dalwood.
What is the difference between a CLT and CLT Ltd? Alison Ward answers The Upper Coly Valley Community Land Trust Ltd is a Community Benefit Society. Community Land Trusts are defined in law (the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), but must adopt a legal form that conforms to the legal definition. The Upper Coly Valley Community Land Trust, like most CLTs, have adopted the legal form of a Community Benefit Society.
Does the Northleigh Parish Council own the field at Chillcombe? Yes they do and only the amount required to build the 6 houses will be sold.
4. Questions & Answers

- What do you consider to be an affordable rent? It was explained that, if the capital grant needed to subsidise the build cost comes from the Government's Homes & Communities Agency, rents would be set at 80% of the market rent for properties of similar size or at the local housing allowance, whichever is the lower amount. If the grant comes from the community housing fund from EDDC then there is the potential for lower rents to be set.¹
- What is the reason for restricting the project to 6 houses? This is based on the housing need survey completed by Devon Home Choice completed in 2014 and currently updated to the following:

CURRENT DEVON HOME CHOICE FIGURES FOR NORTHLEIGH, SOUTHLEIGH AND FARWAY

There are currently a total of 12 households on the Devon Home Choice register living or working in the three parishes. These are broken down by parish below:-

Northleigh – 5 households resident

Southleigh – 1 household resident

Farway – 6 households, 5 residents and 1 working in parish

It should be noted that not all of these households may wish to continue to live in the three parishes or may not have the local connection. However, the numbers have increased from 7 in the 2014 survey which could be down to increased publicity and awareness of the affordable housing project.

None of the above households is included in the 2014 survey figures so there are a possible 3 further households which are in housing need across the 3 parishes.

- Northleigh PC have also requested that there is a covenant put in to say only 6 homes can be built, as this is all they have agreed to be built at the site.
- Are you aware that it used to be a tip site? Yes the CLT is aware that material was used to fill an old marl pit.
- What about the soak away? The CLT knows about this - it follows the hedge at the top end of the field so won't be affected.
- Where will new houses waste go. Into a local treatment plant.
- The field was purchased for Northleigh. Was there a meeting prior to this for information about the CLT. Yes in 2016

¹ Post meeting note: Rents in Dalwood are set at 80% of the market rent and are £102.37/week for a 1bed flat and £126.31/week for a 2bed house. These rents are paid over 48 weeks so the 52/week equivalent will be a little lower. The Local Housing Allowance for East Devon (i.e. the most payable through Housing Benefit) is £123.58/week for a 1bed flat and £153.02/week for a 2bed house so the actual rents are clearly much lower.

- What happens to the £19,000.00 that's its sold for? It goes to Northleigh Parish Council for them to put back in to the village in whichever way they see fit.
- Would tenants have affordable housing? Yes the rents would be set at the most affordable rents that the CLT can do after looking at which grants to apply for. The CLT wishes will look at all options and find the most affordable rent they can.
- It was said that some hadn't heard about the project despite it being in the link and previous open meetings in Widworthy/Wilmington and Northleigh and posters being put on notice boards and leaflet drops being done for both open meetings.
- Who put you up there as the board? People volunteered at open meetings - local people who wanted to get the project up and running for the good of the 3 parishes concerned.
- Who has organised this meeting? The founding board have and they are driving it forward meeting at least monthly to continue the progress of the CLT.
- What about traffic? It is inevitable that there will be more traffic as most homes these days have at least 1 more likely 2 cars.
- It has been seen that the CLT are on Companies House with no chairman and no board. This is because Companies House is not the regulator of Community Benefit Societies, which are registered with the Financial Conduct Authority.²
- What is Willy Rich's roll? - Chairman of the CLT
- How was the board formed? The board was formed from interested volunteers.
- There must be a conflict of interest because there are people on the Parish Council and the CLT Board. Willy Rich and Arthur Stevens have abstained from voting on the parish council where they discussed the selling of the field and they were not the founding members of the CLT.
- Where has the money come from so far? The three parish councils have agreed
- to make small grants to cover any initial costs. But currently there hasn't been any money spent.

² Post meeting note: The registration is here:
<https://mutuals.fsa.gov.uk/SocietyDetails.aspx?Number=7557&Suffix=CBS>

- How did Wessex get involved? The Wessex Community Land Trust Project were invited to talk to the Community by Devon Communities Together (who had carried out a housing needs survey for the Parish Councils).
- How did you get to the sum of £19,000.00? £3000.00 per site and £1000.00 for legal fees. The usual land value for an 'exception site' (where affordable homes can be built to meet a local need) is an uplift from agricultural value; nowhere near full residential value.
- What about the right to build? This project is being taken forward under the Council's policy for exception sites in rural areas.
- Who did the housing need survey? Devon Communities Together.
- What's the process going forward? The CLT will make applications for a grant to do initial investigations then, all being well, apply for a further grant to make a planning application. Then a section 106 agreement will also be put in place, prioritising occupancy to local people. If planning consent is granted, Teign Housing would then finance, build and manage the project under a lease with the CLT.
- How did you select Teign housing? There was an invitation sent to four housing associations, two didn't reply and two did, after that several board members went around and looked at the projects completed by both companies and spoke to residents, then both companies were invited to an interview with the board. It was then decided by the board to go with Teign Housing.
- What about the Construction Infrastructure Levy? Willy Rich to take to Northleigh PC.
- The right to buy has gone but what about the right to acquire? This doesn't apply to housing association tenancies in small, rural parishes. There is also a clause in the lease between the CLT and HA to say that they can't be sold under the new right to buy.

Meeting finished at 9.05pm

