

Full Council Report February 2019

Housing Strategy and Enabling

Work continues with planning policy on the how the Housing Strategy will be refreshed and updated in line with the Local Plan and the proposed new garden communities.

A working group has begun reviewing the Housing Allocations Policy to align with the Local Plan objectives of who affordable housing is for within the proposed new garden communities

In addition to our own development programme, since 1st April 2018, 185 new build Affordable properties have been completed by registered providers, this includes 54 shared ownership. This is well above our target with a few months still to go.

We are working with registered provider L&Q and ECC for the successful delivery of district's first Independent Living Scheme, Cornell Court, in Saffron Walden. The scheme will provide 71 units of accommodation and is due for completion in March 2019 with residents beginning to move in by the end of May 2019. All of these apartments will be for rent and allocated in partnership with ECC. This is an exciting addition to the variety of housing available to residents in Uttlesford and this is for those who need extra assistance to stay living independently for as long as possible.

We have been working with registered provider and ECC for the successful delivery of new learning disabilities scheme in Saffron Walden. The scheme completed in November 2018. Residents have been identified and will be moving in once the scheme has been fully staffed.

The first of series of Community Led Housing workshops was held at the council offices. The workshops are designed to inform residents, parish councils and community groups on how to take ideas forward to planning permission. I would encourage all members to come along and bring other enthusiastic residents with you to the next workshop.

Housing Options and Homelessness

330 Homelessness Prevention cases have been opened since April 2018 with people being given where appropriate personalised housing plans to help them keep or secure accommodation. Up to the end of December 13 cases had been accepted as being owed the full homelessness duty. 68 had been prevented from becoming homeless.

Our Housing Options Team have allocated 412 properties for rent so far this year. 130 of these allocations were to new build properties other than our own, the rest to vacancies within the council's own stock.

Council Housing Development Programme

The councils own housing development programme has now delivered a total of 100 properties to date.

The re-modelling of Hatherley Court in Saffron Walden commenced in May 2017 and is taking shape. The scheme is being modernised to a high standard and when complete will provide 26 spacious flats suitable for modern living. There will also be two new one-bed flats added to the scheme, a new ground floor day room with a conservatory overlooking the Common, and a new entrance area. The first phase of works has completed this month with the second phase due to be completed by December 2019

Following the lifting of the 'Debt Cap' it has been agreed that the Council will now take the opportunity of full control of the re-development of Walden Place in Saffron Walden. Planning drawings are being progressed, along with associated surveys and reports. There is continuing consultation with residents.

Building work is progressing on 2 x 2 bed houses and 2 x 1 bed flats and provision of new parking court for adjacent Council owned flats at Newton Grove in Great Dunmow. The properties are due for completion in May 2019.

Building work is also progressing on 4 x 2 bed houses, and associated parking at Frambury Lane in Newport. The properties are due for completion in May 2019.

A planning application for 16 properties at The Moors in Little Dunmow has been submitted it is hoped it will be going to Committee in March 2019.

The Housing Team are also looking at other opportunities to ensure that we are able to use our Right to Buy Receipts on our development programme and not have to return them to government. We will be able to progress development opportunities now that the borrowings cap has been lifted for Uttlesford. The HRA will be looking to borrow up to 70% of the development costs to put with the 30% RTB receipts that we are able to keep.

Last year we sold 9 properties under Right to Buy and this year to date we have sold 8 (another is due to complete next week). This rate of sale is in line with the HRA business plan and with the added flexibility of the removal of the debt cap we would expect to retain our share of RTB receipts and continue to increase our delivery of council housing.