

The Trust

The Newsletter of the Bradwell Community Land Trust No.1 January 2020

Welcome to the first edition of the Bradwell Community Land Trust's newsletter for members. We will be bringing it out three times a year to keep in touch about progress with our projects and plans for the future.

The CLT is currently working on three key projects:

1) Bradwell Head Road

Early last year a letter from a Bradwell resident to Councillor Chris Furness led to the CLT's second project, the acquisition of twelve houses on Bradwell Head Road and Springfield Road formerly owned by the Newburgh company. As a tenant of one of these houses, Kevin Sampson was anxious about their imminent sale on the open market, a potential threat to his family and others being able to stay in Bradwell.

The Newburgh houses, twenty-two originally, were built in the early 1960s when the company was employing a lot of people living in Sheffield and elsewhere. Unlike the new affordable-rent houses on the Bradwell Springs development, which are all two-bed, these houses all have three bedrooms, with gardens to the front and rear. Over the years some of the houses have been let to tenants not connected with the company, and others sold into private ownership.



The first house due for refurbishment

Brian Robertson, who still lives on Bradwell Head Road, joined the Newburgh company as a joiner at the time the houses were built, later becoming Property Maintenance Supervisor. He recalls the special measures that had to be taken with some of the houses on Springfield Road, built close to the Brook. Two houses were built on a concrete raft to protect them against the water, and when some of the gardens flooded, he supervised the construction of a land drain at the back.

At this time Newburgh had operations on several sites, including one in Spain, and the Bradwell workforce was big enough to field its own football team—they had their own pitch on the company site.

The fate of the last twelve houses, the possible disruption to the lives of the tenants, and potential reduction of affordable housing stock in the village, was a matter of concern. Chris Furness raised the issue at the Board of the CLT and we decided to look at the options. Initially, we considered raising all the funds ourselves with grants, but it quickly became apparent we would need to raise some money through loans and also become a registered provider. Sadly the timescales did not allow us to undertake the work required to become a registered provider, so we needed a partner who was.

Funding this initiative was also a challenge, because grants are not normally available to buy existing housing stock. However, National Parks are a unique case where building new houses is highly restricted, driving up prices for both rental and purchase, and the CLT used this fact to develop a new approach for keeping houses of this nature in the affordable rental sector.

The CLT laid the groundwork for most of the funding via grants from Homes England, Derbyshire Dales District Council and Sheffield City Region. We approached the Peak District Rural Housing Association, who will be managing the Bradwell Springs houses on our behalf, to explore a joint venture. PDRHA were enthusiastic about extending their partnership with us. They secured the grants and raised the remaining funds required via loans. PDRHA will manage the houses on a long term lease, with BCLT owning the freehold. Achieving all of this took rather longer than we had originally hoped, and the patience and understanding of both residents and Newburgh is sincerely appreciated.

2) Bradwell Springs

You may have noticed that Bradwell Springs is finally starting to look like a building site. Most of the groundwork is now complete and Camstead have started laying out the roads. The footings of the open first market houses have been started and weather permitting they should now be moving forward at a pace.

Sadly, they have slipped on last summers plan and the first four affordable houses are now due in the summer of 2020 rather than at Easter.

We are still in regular contact with the developer and this interaction will increase as we near completion. One exciting development is that all the houses on the estate, including ours, will include solar panels. So as well as helping save the planet this should help to keep the running costs down

3) Newburgh Hall

We're not sitting back though and there is a demand for more affordable housing, so working with Peak District Rural housing again, we are in the process of procuring Newburgh Hall. Our offer has been accepted and we are busily putting together the funding required. It's early days and there are still a number of areas to sort out, but we are hopeful that we can create four affordable single beds

units. This will complement the 12 two beds on Bradwell Springs and the 12 three beds Bradwell Head Road and Springfield Road.