

Swaffham Prior Community Land Trust (SPCLT) A Success Story 2017

8 miles north of Cambridge, Swaffham Prior is a small, picturesque village with a vast history. Situated a stone's throw from Fenland landmark 'Devil's Dyke', the village is renowned in the area for its historic architecture including two adjacent churches and two windmills.



In 2011, a group of residents dedicated to preserving the rural integrity of their village rallied together over concerns about Swaffham Prior becoming a 'dormitory village'.

Housing pressures from the city of Cambridge had reduced levels of affordable housing and threatened to break down

core community ties, so the people of Swaffham Bulbeck decided it was time to take matters into their own hands. Here is the story of one of the first CLTs in East Cambridgeshire...



Why did Swaffham Prior choose a CLT?

- ✓ Locally controlled, transparent organisation
- ✓ Democratic opportunities for all the community to get involved
- ✓ The properties are dedicated to catering to the needs of future generations through the control of the community

CLT Set Up

- In 2011, a Housing Need Survey indicated that there were residents in the village who were unable to buy a standard family home on local wages. Additionally, **77%** said they would support a small development of affordable homes within the Parish.
- A group of determined residents came together the same year to tackle these housing concerns by setting up their very own CLT with funding from a CLT set-up grant from East Cambridgeshire District Council.

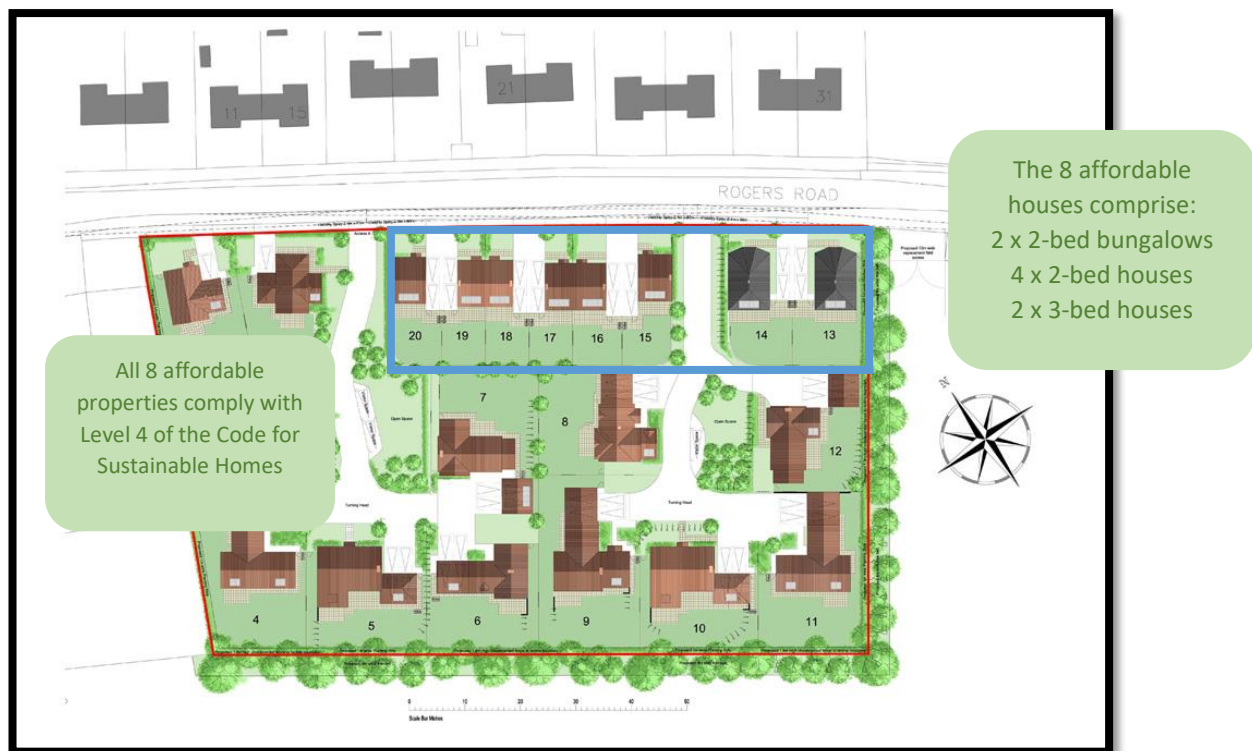
Finding Partners

- With the help of CLT East, SPCLT became a legally incorporated CLT in 2013 and the 6 Trustees started making plans for their scheme almost immediately
- A partnership was formed between local landowners, Hundred Houses Housing Association, and private developers Icen Homes. At the foundation of this partnership was the mutual appreciation for the input of the local community.

Delivering Houses

- Plans for the CLT homes drew on the results of Housing Need Survey, which identified that 13 households were in need of help to continue living in Swaffham Prior.
- A development of 20 houses was agreed upon including 8 affordable homes, and a planning application was submitted just 8 months after the set-up of the CLT!

The scheme site map for Rogers Road:



SPCLT's model of choice differs from that of most CLTs in East Cambridgeshire. SPCLT's agreement with Hundred Houses Housing Association means the affordable homes are under a long term lease to the housing association, who funded the development of the homes. However, true to its principles, the CLT retains crucial nominations rights and sets the rules on who among the village residents is allocated the homes. The Housing Association then manage the tenants, the building repairs and undertake the financial vetting.

The CLT Trustee Board includes a mix of representatives to ensure transparency and clear communication throughout decisions. The SPCLT Board currently consists of a **representative from the Parish Council**, a **representative from Hundred Houses**, a **representative from the existing tenants** and **four other village residents**.

SPCLT Allocations Policy

The purpose of creating an Allocations Policy is to ensure that a CLT can prioritise candidates in terms of their housing need. Swaffham Prior CLT used the following criteria to determine the priority of candidates for their affordable homes:

- Lived in the village for 6 out of past 12 months;
- A minimum of 3 years residence in the village;
- Where family of the applicant have resided in the village for a minimum period of 2 years;
- Where the applicant has employment in the village for a minimum of 15 hours per week



The whole project has been a runaway success. 26 people applied for 8 homes upon completion in March 2016 and to date all homes are occupied by very happy tenants!