

PRESS RELEASE

DATE: 10th Aug 2009

Sod cutting ceremony for Unique Extra Care Housing scheme - first of its kind in Cumbria



Work on the unique Carlisle Extra Care Housing development commenced on Monday 10th August when the occasion was marked with a sod cutting ceremony.

Spearheading the development are the developers Eden Housing Association and Cumbria County Council, Carlisle City Council and NHS Cumbria. Present at the event were representatives from the development partnership including Chair of Eden Housing Association Joan Johnstone, the Chair of Cumbria County Council Cllr Roger Bingham, Carlisle City Council Leader Cllr Mike Mitchelson and representatives from NHS Cumbria plus other development partners.

The scheme named Heysham Gardens and Heysham Meadows, is the only **one of its kind** in the county and will see over £9 million of investment in Carlisle's Belle Vue ward situated in the west of the City. Some of the schemes funding came from a successful joint application to the Department of Health for £4.7 million grant towards the development costs. It is one of only 25 schemes in the UK to benefit from an £80 million Department of Health budget for Extra Care housing.

Joan Johnstone, Chair of Eden Housing Association said "Today's sod cutting ceremony marks the start of building work on site. We are all very excited to see the physical work begin, but today is also about celebrating the work the partnership has done to get us to this point. It is 2 years since Eden Housing Association first became involved in the project. We believe firmly that people should be entitled to live their lives as independently as possible, with their own front door and discreet care services available when needed. This scheme aims to deliver just that and it is our partnership with Cumbria County Council, Carlisle City Council, Cumbria NHS and our construction team that is now making it happen. I congratulate everyone on getting this far and look forward to seeing the development take shape in the coming months."

Cllr Roger Bingham Chair of Cumbria County Council was present at the ceremony and said how happy he was to see the partnership coming together so well. Cllr Eddie Martin, Cumbria County Council's Cabinet member responsible for adult social care, said: "The start of construction work is an important step in a journey which in two years time will give greater choice for older people in North Cumbria to live independent lives while at the same time receiving the care and support they need. Heysham Gardens and Heysham Meadows will be a benchmark facility in the county, with the county council providing an on-site home care team 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I'm confident it will be a shining example of how partnership working can deliver choice, control and independence for older people."

Leader of Carlisle City Council, Cllr Mike Mitchelson, said: "The development will provide another element in the regeneration of the area and also provide local employment during the current recession, as most of the main contractors are from Cumbria, including the builder, Thomas Armstrong."

The flagship scheme is the first Extra Care housing scheme in Cumbria funded by the Department of Health and incorporates many environmental features and high-spec communal facilities, serving as a real community hub.

Crucially, it will meet an identified shortage of Extra Care housing, essential as we have a recognised ageing population. Ultimately this collaboration between the City and County Councils, Eden Housing Association and the PCT represents an excellent example of what can be achieved through partnership working."

The development will create 60 new homes for outright sale, shared ownership and rent and are all designed to accommodate flexible care needs. The scheme will create a vibrant and active community that promotes choice and independence for older persons, and those with a disability or support need.

The Developer, Eden Housing Association, will focus on being sustainable using environmental and ecologically friendly materials and methods such as timber frame construction, sedum roofs, highly efficient heating systems, solar panels and a ground source heat pump. It is also planned to install special attenuation tanks underground to reduce the surface water run off during heavy storms.

All of the homes will be built to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 which incorporates a far higher level of sustainable requirements than the standard regulations for new buildings. Architecturally these homes have been designed as "Lifetime Homes" which allows them to be easily adapted to reflect the current or changing needs of the occupier.

The communal areas of the gardens have been designed to help support and encourage local wildlife and native plants, and to have sensory features allowing residents to touch, smell, feel and hear as well as see while enjoying the gardens. The development has a community feel and is designed around pedestrian access, for those using bus routes and footpaths, rather than cars.

Completion of these innovative homes is planned for early 2011 but already a number of people are showing interest in this exciting development. Anyone interested in finding out more about living at the Heysham Gardens (apartments) or Heysham Meadows (bungalows and houses) should contact Helen Smith at Eden Housing Association on 01768 861407 or email helen.smith@edenha.org.uk.

ENDS

---- Editors notes and picture captions overleaf ----

For more info about this press release or high res pictures, please contact Tracey Errington at Market Sense on 01768 895 964 or email tracey@marketsense.net



Picture captions:

Current plans for the development

Group sod cutting: Ward Cllrs Mary Styth & Cllr Jessica Riddle and centre EHA Chair Joan Johnstone

Core partner Sod cutters: Paul Davies CE EHA, Jack Geddes, Thos Armstrong, Cllr Jessica Riddle, Joan Johnstone EHA Chair, Cllr Mary Stythe, Cllr Roger Bingham Cumbria County Council Chair, Mike Mitchelson Carlisle City Council Leader,

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Independent living in older age

With 9/10 Britons preferring to stay at home in older age, people want to remain independent with a range of support and care of their choice. This new scheme allows residents to access a range of services on site and will provide great peace of mind for residents, families and friends. The Extra Care Village is a vital part of the regeneration in the area, creating a mixed tenure estate with services to cater for the needs of the new community and convenient links to existing amenities and community facilities.

Eden Housing Association is an established Registered Social Landlord providing over 1500 homes for affordable rental in the Cumbria districts of Eden, rural Carlisle and Allerdale. It provides a range of accommodation and services to meet the needs of young single persons, couples, families, older persons and the homeless, including specialist provision with support. They are keen to offer products to a wider audience in Cumbria with continuing emphasis on market towns and rural areas, supporting growth and sustainability.

Heysham Extra Care Housing Scheme

This will incorporate apartments, bungalows and houses, the latter specifically designed for residents or family members with physical disabilities forming a core and cluster scheme. It is the first new build multi tenure extra care scheme to be built in Cumbria. The proposed development aspires to high standards of architectural and landscape detail introducing sustainable construction techniques, green roofs, renewable energy sources and low energy consumption.

