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Eden Housing Association completes 7 new homes on former garage site



A plot at Brent Road in Penrith, which included unused garages described as an eyesore, has been developed by Eden Housing Association (EHA) to create much needed affordable housing.

The two houses and five bungalows are a good example of how good use can be made of small spaces to create more affordable homes. The houses at the front were sold as shared ownership, helping people onto the property ladder and the five bungalows enable older people to downsize, freeing up family homes for the next generation.

John Clasper, Chief Executive of Eden Housing Association said “We are a small rural housing association so we focus on our strengths in creating flexible, good quality small schemes in keeping with their surrounds. This is the first of four developments we are working on across Eden this year. In replacing our garage site, we have found a good value way of maximising opportunity to create affordable homes.

“Our four Eden developments have been financed with the help of low cost loans from Eden District Council’s Affordable Housing and Innovation Fund (AHIF). The Brent Road development, which cost over £800,000, also benefitted from EDC providing some additional land behind the garages. It’s great to create a new purpose for this space and we have reduced the risk of anti-social behaviour which was happening from time to time at the garages.

More importantly, it provides retirement homes for older residents in Penrith, frees up family homes for rent and also creates an opportunity for younger people and families to step onto the property ladder”

Mrs Hamilton, an existing tenant with EHA, was one of the first to move in to one of the bungalows, transferring from a three bedroomed family house on Pategill - her home for 45 years. Mrs Hamilton found managing the large house and the stairs was becoming increasingly difficult.

A spring move means Mrs Hamilton is now enjoying her single level home and finds the shower and wet room easy to use.

Mrs Hamilton said “I came to have a look before it was finished and took time to decide because I loved my house. Now I’ve moved in, I enjoy being here - it’s easy to manage and there are two bedrooms which is very handy when family stay”.

Bungalows and their level access can help people remain independent in their own home for longer and with the support of friends and families making use of the telecare services on offer, extended families can receive reassurance too.

Moving out of the family sized house means the 3 bedroomed property in Penrith could be re-allocated and is now home to a new generation family with two children.

Brent Road is the first of two EHA developments in Penrith to be completed this year - both accessing the Affordable Housing and Innovation Fund (AHIF), and both including new homes for older people.

Eden District Council's Deputy Leader and Housing and Health Portfolio Holder, Councillor Lesley Grisedale, said: "I am delighted that Eden District Council has been involved with this housing scheme which provides a fabulous mix of designs. The two bed bungalows are a popular choice for residents as they grow older and help free up family sized accommodation elsewhere.

Affordable housing is at a premium in areas like Eden so it's fantastic to see the completion of this quality accommodation. These properties will bring added vitality to the area and enhance the lives of all the residents who live in the new homes. Building more quality affordable housing is a top corporate priority for Eden District Council as currently there is just over 1,000 people seeking accommodation on the Council's Housing Register."

The other small Penrith development of three one bedroomed retirement bungalows has just been completed at Nightingale Terrace next to Sim Court Supported Housing scheme. It too was developed on a site of garages.

