

Report by
Councillor Martin R Hall to
Westfield Parish Council
Upon Attendance
on 10th October 2018
at
South East Community Led
Housing Conference.

Report to Westfield P.C. Upon S.E. Community Led Housing Conference

Page 1

Conference Aim.

To provide information in order to encourage, facilitate and enable local communities to meet need for affordable housing upon a community led basis.

Conference Objectives.

- Enhance the understanding of community led housing options.
- Developing the pool of community led housing expertise.
- Increase the opportunities to take forward more community led housing schemes.
- Facilitate greater networking of all key stakeholders to improve delivery.
- Share good practice /what works and pitfalls to avoid and the resources available.

MRH Notes, Questions & Suggestions For Consideration By Westfield P.C.

In the UK, home ownership has very much become engrained as a societal norm. There's a widespread expectation that everyone should be able to purchase their own home at some point in their lives. Whilst there is nothing inherently wrong with this idea, it does rely on enough affordable homes being constructed to remain a realistic aspiration rather than just a pipedream.

This can be achieved by adopting and utilising established methods provided by creation of Community Land Trusts (CLT's) and Community Led Housing (CLH) schemes.

The system can also contribute to the availability of affordable rented and shared ownership homes

The Budget announced £8.5 million of funding to help up to 500 Neighbourhood Forums obtain permission land for homes sold at a discount. Any CLTs working with Neighbourhood Forums could explore how this could help bringing forward affordable land.

Currently councils can sell land for up to £2m less than the market value without seeking written consent from the Secretary of State. If the land isn't already 'held for planning purposes' then the disposal must improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of their community. Several CLT's have benefited from this, enabling them to deliver genuinely affordable housing on public land.

Some example of local CLT's.

- Heart of Hastings CLT
- Icklesham Parish CLT.
- Herstmonceux CLT
- Lewes CLT

Report to Westfield P.C. Upon S.E. Community Led Housing Conference

Page 2

Assistance with funding issues and information for CLH and CLT Schemes can be sought from a number of established organisations including :

- Action in Rural Sussex
- Sussex Community Housing Hub
- Homes England (Government Dept.)
- The National Community Land Trust Network

Conclusion.

Council may wish to give some consideration into investigating possibilities of setting up a Westfield Parish Community Trust with a view to acquiring suitable land and providing affordable housing solutions to meet local housing need.

Should Council wish to pursue this further, I would suggest a sub-committee of a number of Councillors with the possible inclusion of Roger Carrier, if he is willing, to report back to Council upon:

- The local housing need requirements
- Availability of suitable land for affordable housing
- Feasibility of setting up a Westfield Parish CLT.

I have established that Tom Warder - Community Led Housing Manager for Sussex Community Housing Hub, would be pleased to meet and provide a talk and further information upon Community Land Trusts and Community Led Housing. I am happy to arrange this if Council Wishes.

Cllr Martin Hall - 05/11/2018