

# COMMUNITY LED HOUSING

An ambitious plan to support community-led house building is underway in Malvern. To make it happen, enthusiastic members of the group are needed, as well as suggestions for places that new community housing can be built. Jan Dyer from Malvern Hills Community Led Housing tells us more.

Community-led housing is usually a small development of homes designed, built, owned and/or controlled by a group of local people who came together to do just this. At the end of the day, this means long-term quality of life for communities.

Young people really struggle to afford a home and end up paying large rents, while retired people might want to downsize but can't find a suitable place to move to. The concept of community support is a central part of community-led housing and its value has been brought into sharp focus by the current pandemic.

Projects like ours address these issues by creating homes that are efficient and easy to maintain, that could provide communal facilities like washing machines, veg gardens and living space, with everyone supporting each other.

We have a core team of five members but want to expand our group. We are forming a committee that will search for a suitable place to build new homes. We will navigate the maze of government policy, funding and planning rules with the aim of building homes that fulfil the needs I've mentioned.

Anybody with a commitment to make this happen can get involved. There is a multitude of tasks to tackle which include everything from joining the committee, to admin and research tasks. We would particularly welcome input from anybody who has worked in construction, architectural practice and design, planning, or related areas.

One of our group previously built their own home and is aware of the pitfalls and challenges ahead. You don't have to live in one of the eventual houses to be involved, we welcome anybody who is interested so please get in



touch to find out more. This is a very worthwhile project and elsewhere in the country, from Devon, to Shropshire and Nottinghamshire, other community-led housing initiatives are proving very successful.

We have received a small grant from Homes England to establish this project; local councils are supportive of us and we are already looking at likely plots in Malvern Hills area. This might be land rejected by traditional developers because they don't offer sufficient profit.

We are actively in discussion regarding two possible sites and would be interested to hear from anybody who can make a suggestion for other places that might be suitable. Similar schemes elsewhere have used so-called 'exception' sites which afford the space for between 10 and 20 homes, which are eco-friendly and sustainable.

## CONTACT US

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