

12 July 2011

Breaking new ground in Cambridgeshire

Building will shortly commence on the first affordable homes in Whaddon Village, providing much needed housing to this area of South Cambridgeshire.

To mark the occasion and in recognition of the National Housing Federation's Rural Housing Week, **bpha** held a groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday 12th July on the site where the houses will be built. The event was also attended by representatives from South Cambridgeshire District Council, Whaddon Parish Council and Bramall Construction.

John Cross, Chief Executive, **bpha** said: "Every journey must begin with a single step or, in this case a single cut. It was important for us to commemorate the start of this particular journey because, along with providing much needed affordable housing, the plans for Whaddon embody Rural Housing Week. The week, and the construction of these new homes, is all about building homes for local people so that they can remain in the rural community that they know and love, and not be forced to move somewhere unfamiliar and away from family and friends."

Part funded by the HCA and in accordance with the planning requirements of a Section 106 agreement, the site will be a combination of eight two and three bedroom properties with private gardens and allocated parking. Five of these will be available for rent and three for shared ownership purchase at up to maximum 80% equity share of the open market value.

The project follows the purchase of land from Cambridgeshire County Council at the modest cost required to ensure the delivery of affordable housing at this site. It is the fifth site that the County has sold in South Cambridgeshire for a total of 77 affordable properties.

Mr Cross continued: "Whaddon is quiet and peaceful, yet still within easy reach of Cambridge and the local vicinity so it's an ideal spot for commuters. It's a great location for anyone seeking the village life."

Councillor David Bard, vice-chairman for South Cambridgeshire Council said: “We’re proud to be a part of this historic event that marks the end of an extensive period of planning and negotiation between the local councils, the parish and planning authority. We have been planning this for some time and we look forward to seeing the building start soon.”

Robert Loudoun, Construction Director at Bramall Construction said: “We’re delighted to be working alongside **bpha**, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Whaddon Parish Council and the local community to help to deliver new homes for the village.

“At Bramall we work closely with communities to ensure that their needs are met and we are pleased that the plight of the need for new housing for rural communities is being marked by the National Housing Federation’s Rural Housing Week.”

The houses will be ready for occupation in January 2012 and available to anyone with a local connection to Whaddon who meets the eligibility requirements.

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Notes to Editors:

Rural Housing Week is a local campaign aimed at highlighting the important role that affordable housing plays in keeping rural communities vibrant.

Events for Rural Housing week in the South East and East will run between 11 and 17 July 2011.

For more information, visit www.housing.org.uk

About bpha

bpha is a leading provider of affordable homes throughout central, southern and eastern England and is a preferred development partner of the Housing Corporation.

bpha manages more than 16,000 general needs, sheltered and shared ownership properties, mainly in Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire and builds more than 1,000 new homes each year. It also provides

supported housing, accommodation for homeless people, a Foyer and a hostel for young people, and a women's refuge.

bpha is the lead member of Key Communities, a partnership that unites seven housing associations working to create high quality, affordable homes across the east of England.

In Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, **bpha** is working in partnership with the two County Councils and The Orders of St John Care Trust, a registered charity, on a £100 million project to upgrade or replace care homes for older people across both counties.

For further information, please contact Suzanne Miller, Communications Officer, on 01234 791 036 or email suzanne.miller@bpha.org.uk