



Good Practice

Objective

<p>Links with local schools</p>	<p>To encourage a positive discussion of affordable housing; and to provide a platform for the school to act as a champion of the scheme and raise awareness in the local community of how key services such as schools would benefit from affordable housing development.</p>
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Detail

The Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) has led on this work, as part of engaging with local communities at the onset of the process. At Middleton by Wirksworth, the Registered Provider's (RP) development team delivered activities within the school within its current capacity. We are using a local artist who is fine art student whose interests are housing and community. At Middleton by Wirksworth, the RP and the District Council have both contributed £500 each to finance a final art structure on site.

The RHE is looking to develop the materials that Derwent Living devised into an activity pack that other schools could use. The RHE has worked with primary schools at Bakewell and at Middleton by Wirksworth as part of this process. At Middleton by Wirksworth, a scheme of 14 affordable homes started in March 2010.

Derwent Living, who is developing the homes, worked with 20 of the oldest schoolchildren, showing them the site and then undertaking 4 different activities around pricing up a scheme, scheme layout and design, wildlife on site before and after construction and a quiz on the different jobs involved in the process. Derwent will also be organising an activity about the dangers of building sites, and schoolchildren have already designed 'Keep out' posters for a building site.

Outcomes

Partnership working with schools has created some very positive feedback from the head teacher. The homes built are for people with a strong local connection so we need to ensure that we are aware of everyone in need in the Parish and the school can help with this.

Helps to improve well-being for local children – engages children in their local community and environment; encourages a sense of belonging; encourages positive behaviour in and out of school; brings new knowledge/experience about housing development to the pupils.

Some of the local children will be moving in to the new homes – this may help them deal more confidently with moving home and encourage ownership of the scheme. Likely to reduce housing management problems through anti-social behaviour from local children.

Update - 2012 This proved to be a very worthwhile project. The development of 14 homes was completed in November 2011 but the legacy of the work undertaken will continue for several years to come. A local artist, a stone mason, the RHE and Community Engagement staff from Derwent Living were involved in the project which spent several days working with school children. The final art structure will be placed on the site early in 2012. Other developments which could benefit from the process will be considered in 2012/13. The project was also the subject of an unsuccessful bid to the HCA Housing and Regeneration Awards in the category of Best Use of Arts and Culture in Regeneration.

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Rural Affordable Housing
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