

St Austell Urban Village



Effective delivery of mixed tenure schemes

An exemplar mixed-use brownfield regeneration site comprising 147 residential units, retail and offices in the centre of St Austell based around traditional urban village principles and demonstrating the integration of a variety of affordable home solutions within a high quality sustainable tenure-blind environment.

Partners include:

Devon & Cornwall Housing
Westco Properties Ltd
Midas Homes Ltd
The Princes Foundation
Restormel Borough Council
Cornwall County Council
South West Regional Development Agency
Alan Leather Associates (Architects)
Ward Williams Associates (Employers Agent)

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The site, which was an old railway siding, was acquired by the DCHA subsidiary, Westco Properties Ltd, as tenants-in-common with Restormel Borough Council in 1996.

The vision for the site was to create a new community in St Austell that through design would integrate with the existing surrounding development and provide a high quality sustainable scheme based on urban village principles while delivering a variety of affordable housing solutions as required by the housing needs survey.

A masterplanning exercise was undertaken with the assistance of the Prince's Foundation to provide 147 residential units including 12 social rented, 10 shared ownership, 6 sub-market, 6 live-work and a supported housing unit. From the outset the design group was tasked with designing a scheme that was truly tenure-blind, that would integrate with the retail, leisure and business uses and would use high quality locally sourced materials.

Planning consent was granted in January 2003, work commenced on site in June 2003 and completion is anticipated in December 2007.

The partners agreed that the site should deliver a high proportion of affordable housing within the first phase. Through the partnership working, 11 affordable homes, including 2 social rented units, 3 shared ownership units, 2 sub market units and a large bespoke supported unit were delivered to programme by January 2005. The supported unit was completed in September 2004.

Outcomes

An exemplar tenure-blind mixed-use scheme delivering high quality affordable homes early in the site development. The development seeks to address the needs of a diverse sector of the St Austell population aspiring to own their own home through the innovative provision of a variety of intermediate housing types as well as the traditional social rented housing.

Lessons learnt

The high quality finish to the units and to the wider estate together with the resident-led management company has ensured that the urban village will prosper as a mixed-use site integrating a wide variety of people from various backgrounds living and working together within a high quality environment.