

**Collaboration Benefits Rural Case Study  
East Bridgford: “Local Homes For Local People”**

**Description:**

The delivery of local affordable homes for local people’s requirements, led by a voluntary action group in partnership with a number of organisations.

**Organisations collaborating:**

- Parish Plan Action Group (Conservation Planning and the Environment) comprising 6 villagers including a retired headmaster, managing director of a local building company and a retired architect.
- East Bridgford Parish Council
- Rushcliffe Borough Council Strategic Housing
- Rushcliffe Borough Council Planning Department
- Eastern Shires Housing Association

**Types of collaboration:**

- Joint planning
- Combined influencing and campaigning
- Shared resources

**Motivation for collaboration:**

- Village Appraisal, Housing Needs Survey, and the Parish Plan all highlighted a strong village need for smaller affordable housing units and units for more elderly community members.
- A local person had not made it to the top of the housing list in East Bridgford in nine years, despite some living in appalling conditions, as East Bridgford is not a deprived area and hence people who live there are awarded fewer points.
- Co-ordinated activities resulting in a stronger voice
- Knowledge and information sharing to deliver improved services for local people

**Benefits gained:**

- Partnership pays off as they have delivered
  - Local Homes for Local People: 6 bungalows, three for rent and three shared ownership, and 4 houses: 2 three bed houses for rent and 2 two bed houses shared ownership
  - High quality housing design which links well with the existing housing and does not conform to the typical perception of social housing
  - Energy efficient homes with high insulation levels, low energy lighting, solar panels built into the roof, and a ventilation system which uses loft space for air circulation

- Design and energy efficiency would not have been so prominent without co-ordinated activities between the housing provider and the local population and the information sharing

### **Key steps:**

- Investigation by action group into what could be done to address the need
- Rural Exception Schemes were in their infancy and no guidance had been developed at the time the group were looking to provide housing, so much time was invested in understanding the intricacies and how it would work in practice, including ongoing liaison with RBC planners.
- Strategic Housing at RBC assisted the group to locate the necessary funding and offered their own money for the project too, if it would help get it off the ground
- Scheme devised, including the rules and regulations of how the local homes would remain for local people
- Government guidelines were then produced regarding Rural Exception Sites so the scheme had to be revised
- Beauty contest held inviting five registered social landlords to pitch for the privilege of developing the scheme. Eastern Shires were chosen to run the scheme and held numerous public meetings to keep in touch with local opinion
- Land identified and purchased
- Planning application put in and permission finally secured following a review of the evidence gained through the consultation processes involved with the Village Appraisal, Housing Needs Survey and Parish Plan.
- Development built and ready for allocation

### **Problems encountered:**

- Overcoming the resentment from certain community groups regarding “council housing” and its stereotypical appearance
- Difficulties identifying land as Eastern Shires and RBC only wanted to offer the owner actual agricultural value
- Certain parties forging ahead down a path without sharing the information at all stages
- Infrastructure for the new homes i.e. new roads did not go in before work started. Due to poor weather there were delays on site as it was too wet to work with no proper access road.
- Ensuring that other housing associations did not relocate their residents to the new housing

### **Contacts:**

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