

Strategic Land Case Studies





About us

The Strategic Land team at the Church Commissioners for England brings forward land for new housing developments across the country. Our aim is to deliver new homes, including affordable homes, and employment areas that support and enhance their local surroundings. We do this by seeking to build new, and strengthen existing, communities, helping to create and sustain vibrant and vital places.

Many new developments also include new schools, community facilities, local retail centres, libraries, sports facilities and new areas of open space, including new country parks, which benefit not only new residents but also neighbouring communities.

The importance of high quality placemaking and thorough engagement with local parishes and dioceses, local authorities and existing communities is at the heart of what we do. The case studies which follow provide details of some of the new developments and communities that we are currently helping to create.



Completed

Wetheral, Cumbria

We achieved planning permission for new homes within the existing community of Wetheral in Cumbria in 2015. Story Homes have delivered a high-quality new community of 41 houses, of which 30% are affordable in line with local policy, within a landscaped setting with areas of public open space. Financial contributions have also been provided to enhance local education provision and open space within the community. The new homes are now fully occupied.





PHOTOS: CREST NICHOLSON

Ongoing

Finberry, Ashford, Kent

In 2014, the development of 1,100 new homes, to the south of Ashford town centre, began on our land. Of these new homes, 20% are affordable, in line with policy at the time planning permission was granted. Our development partner, Crest Nicholson, commenced the construction of a new Kentish village surrounded by water meadows and accessible countryside, with footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes established within the wider landscape. Seven years later, the village is now well-established, and the community is flourishing. Several residents who bought their first homes at Finberry have, as their families have grown, moved to larger new homes within the village, demonstrating the popularity of the community.

During the development's inception, we engaged in detailed dialogue with Canterbury Diocese regarding a local church presence within the new community. We were pleased to be able to site a new vicarage within the development, thereby ensuring a continuing clergy presence as well as a church point of contact for us within the new community.

A new nursery and primary school opened in 2017. A further planning application has been submitted for a local centre, including a food store, three other local shops, a family restaurant and further new homes, of which 30% will be affordable, in line with Ashford Borough Council's updated policy. We hope that planning permission will be granted soon, and that construction will begin on this important facility in 2022.





Forthcoming

Chidswell, West Yorkshire

At Chidswell, we have been involved for many years in proposals to bring forward a vibrant new community that will deliver much needed new homes and employment opportunities for the local area.

A significant programme of stakeholder consultation has been undertaken, involving local residents, businesses, interest groups, ward councillors and the Yorkshire Design Review Panel. We also consulted with the local parishes and diocese as our proposals progressed.

We recently submitted a planning application to Kirklees Council for the provision of 1,535 new homes, of which 20% will be affordable in line with local planning policy, 1.2 million sq. ft. of employment uses and a new primary school. The new community will also include extensive areas of public open space and new cycle and walking routes.



Forthcoming

West Bersted, Bognor Regis, West Sussex

In West Sussex, we have adopted virtual methods of engagement in order to ensure that residents are able to fully review, and provide feedback, on plans for a new community at West Bersted, to the north west of Bognor Regis.

We have also continued to engage with Chichester Diocese as our plans for this new community evolve. We meet regularly with the diocese to provide updates of our proposals to understand and assist them with their own growth aspirations for this part of West Sussex.

Working collaboratively with the council and three parish councils, we have secured the council's formal endorsement of a framework masterplan for this new community that will provide at least 2,500 new homes, of which 30% are to be affordable in line with

local planning policy, a primary school, sports pitches, a local centre, parkland areas, employment provision, and an expansive network of walking and cycling links. The masterplan, which adopts a landscape-led approach to design and placemaking, shows how the new residential development will be successfully integrated within the existing community.

Virtual consultation events and advisory group meetings have been arranged to present the proposals, including online presentations and a public exhibition for residents.

Whilst fully recognising the ongoing need for, and benefits of, face-to-face consultation (when we are safely able to do so), we have been pleased with the extent of stakeholder participation in the process which has helped to shape and inform our emerging proposals.



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