



## CCB and Affordable Rural Housing in Berkshire

From 2005-2017 we ran a Rural Housing Enabler project that worked with communities, local landowners, Local Authorities and Housing Associations to bring forward small developments that made a big difference in rural communities. Over the course of the project, rural exception site developments were built in Wargrave, Chaddleworth, Woolhampton and Hungerford following housing need surveys and with the support of local communities. As a result of this work, 41 homes were built specifically to give local people access to affordable homes.

### Wargrave:

*“Even if we had a lot of money, we couldn’t have asked for a better home. It’s in a perfect location, we have lovely neighbours, and our gas and electricity are a quarter of what they were in our previous house.”* says Daniel of his new three-bedroom house in the Berkshire village of Wargrave.

Daniel and his partner, Louisa, a nursery school teacher, moved into their new house Wargrave in March 2011 with their teenage daughter and one-year-old son. For three years, Daniel had looked after his grandmother in Wargrave after she had a stroke. When she died in May 2010, he effectively became homeless as the house was in her name. He and Louisa wanted to stay in Wargrave but realised they simply couldn’t afford it.



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*“We didn’t think we stood a chance of getting one. It was like winning the lottery when we did.”* Louisa

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The family faced the very real possibility of having to move away from their roots, away from the school that their daughter attended and away from Daniel’s mother, who often looked after their one-year-old son when Louisa was at work. However, when they heard about the Kings Acre development, they put in an application to Wokingham Borough Council, explaining that Daniel had a strong connection to the village.

## Woolhampton:

A development of 8 affordable homes for people with a local connection was completed in Woolhampton in 2017. The properties all benefit from large gardens and beautiful country views across the Kennet Valley. The new homes were developed by Aster Homes a rural exception site, where the homes must be affordable and for local people in perpetuity.



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*“We are so thrilled to be able to return to the village that my husband grew up in . We are now surrounded by family support, friends, and lovely new neighbours. The stress has gone from our lives.” Sarah Canning, occupant of one the homes built.*

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With the strong support of Woolhampton Parish Council, West Berkshire District Council, a willing landowner, and the development team at Aster Homes, 8 local families have the benefit of new homes. The commitment of residents to driving this scheme forward in a very positive way was central to the success of this scheme.

The much-needed houses, built in St Andrews Close, will now be made available to those who have a strong connection to the village. The development was the first rural exception scheme by Sovereign in West Berkshire in several years and was the result of a housing survey conducted by the parish council, who have been addressing the need for locally built affordable homes for a number of years.

## Chaddleworth:



St Andrews Close in Chaddleworth consists of two one-bedroom houses, three two-bedroom houses and two three-bedroom houses, designed by Sovereign’s in-house architects. The designed homes reflect the local vernacular and complement the house already in existence within the neighbourhood, incorporating features such as dormer windows and contrasting brickwork patterns. Each new home has been constructed to meet the Code for

Sustainable Homes level 3 and has a number of environmental features including air source heat pumps and under-floor heating.