

Elderflowers News



Issue Three November 2013

Dear Friends and Supporters

We want to keep in touch with all of you and reassure you that we're doing as much as we can to prepare for the next steps while we await the result of the negotiations for a site for the Elderflowers development. We hope to have news about a site within the next few months; when we do we will invite you to a get-together to talk about timescale, design, communal facilities, green spaces and working together on management.

Similarly, we are keen to start talking to the Management Focus Group volunteers about the various options for self-management as soon as we know we have the land in our sights.

The next newsletter will be in early spring and we would like to include comments from our supporters: we encourage all of you to collect information about design and self-management, especially if you have personal experience or expertise of any kind.

Open Meeting -12 June 2013

We were very pleased to welcome people interested in Elderflowers to the MK Community Foundation suite in Acorn House. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce ourselves and find out what you – the future residents of the first Elderflowers development, would like. We had a very interesting presentation from Prof. Sheila Peace from the Open University who told us about the research that has been carried out into the design of kitchens for older people which will hopefully lead to better designed kitchens and inform our choices too.

Kodzo Selormey, one of our Directors then shared ideas of what he thinks are important design issues, we then broke into smaller groups and talked through a number of these ideas and concepts. A summary of the output from these groups can be seen on the bottom of the last page.

Visits

Elderflowers is aware that there are many schemes, locally and nationally, that are offering new types of housing provision which we believe we have much to learn from by developing our networks and visiting these schemes. Over the next few months we hope to facilitate visits to :-

The Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust development , Hartrigg Oaks Village in York -

<http://www.jrht.org.uk/>



LILAC
Low

Impact Living Affordable Community, Leeds -

<http://www.lilac.coop/>



BedZED - Beddington Zero Eergy Development is an environmentally

friendly housing development in Hackbridge, London - <http://www.oneplanetcommunities.org/communities/bedzed/>



Pilgrim Gardens in Leicester (a 2012 HAPPI winner!) It won the 'Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation Award - <http://www.housingcare.org/housing-care/facility-info-159812-pilgrim-gardens-vington-england.aspx>



Rainbow Housing Co-operative in New Bradwell



If you are interested in joining us on any of these visits please let us know and we will send full details. The first visit is planned to take place on 23rd November with a trip to Lilac in Leeds.

Charity Car Raffle 2013

We are taking part in the MK Community Foundation Car Raffle to raise much needed funds. We have tickets and would like as many volunteers as possible to help sell the tickets in the centre or privately. The car is on display in Middleton Hall and we have a number of slots. The dates are Monday 9th December from 9am to 12 am, Saturday 15th December 11 am to 2pm and Wednesday 1st January 9am to 12 am. Please let us know if you can help by calling Carol on 01908-677730 or Jane on 01908-374563 as soon as possible.

We are pleased to introduce our new Directors, Jane Moore who is responsible for keeping track of our mailing list, our web-site and production and distribution of the newsletter. Debbie Greaves and Kay Greenhalgh who have joined recently and are invaluable in bring their insight and experience to our team. We would like to appoint a Director that represents the residents. Please put your name forward if you would like to represent residents on the board.

Recently we have received a lot of reports with new ideas about housing, people getting older, many of them espousing ideas that we have been trying to get across for many years. At least they are catching up with us. Debbie has kindly read the whole of the Demos report <http://www.demos.co.uk/files/TopoftheLadder-web.pdf?1378922386> which was launched in the Houses of Parliament. A copy of the summary produced by Debbie can be viewed on our website.

Another report launched on 22nd October 2013 is called “**Silver Linings, The Active Third Age and the City**” produced by RIBA is very attractive and punchy....

<http://www.buildingfutures.org.uk/projects/building-futures/silver-linings-the-active-thirdage-and-the-city>

And finally there is a report exploring the appeal of resident controlled housing, giving various examples, produced by the Housing LIN, called “Growing Older Together: The Case for Housing that is Shaped and Controlled by Older People” (a Housing LIN Case Study

Report—October 2013) 4. www.housinglin.org.uk and this mentions a report produced by Carol called “**What about the other 95%**”.

<http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingOlderPeople/UserInvolvement/?parent=3667&child=8751>

Another useful site for information is <http://housinginlaterlife.co.uk/>

Getting Involved

Things are beginning to move at a rapid pace and we hope to be in a position to announce a formal agreement on site early in the New Year. At this important time for the project. It is vital that our supporters get involved in whatever way we can; feeding back comments or suggestions that might help to make this development something that truly reflects local needs and aspiration.

Action you might take:

- 1. Update your contact details:** Please send us your email address so that we can make contact with you regularly. We will make sure that all our supporters have access to the regular newsletters but postage is expensive and we would rather send email updates if possible.
- 2. Help raise our profile and fundraise:** Let us know as soon as possible if you are able to help with the MK Community Foundation Car Raffle during December and January. This will not only give us an opportunity to talk to people about Elderflowers but will also help raise much needed funds for mailing, events, visits etc.
- 3. Join us on a visit:** As you can see from the newsletter we are planning a number of fact finding visits. If you are able to join us you would be most welcome. Car sharing will make it less expensive but there will be a modest cost involved. Please let us know if you are interested in joining us for any of the visits.

4. Join the Board: We are looking to recruit a new Director as a stakeholder representative. If you are interested but want to talk to some one about what is involved before making any firm commitment, we would be happy to meet you.

With Thanks...

We're very grateful for the support of Milton Keynes Community Foundation who gave us a grant to produce our newsletters, hold our meetings and continue to use our office.

We also thank you for your support and interest; as soon as we have news that our site negotiations have been successful we will contact you again and invite you to a gathering to get on with it!

With our very best wishes for the festive season,

Carol Barac and the Elderflowers Projects Team.

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This is the information gathered at the meeting held on 12th June 2013.

Table of questions discussed at the meeting:

Results:

Main Entrance - should it have a secure entry system with doorman/caretaker support?	Secure entry and one group suggested a concierge.
Size – one or two bedrooms (approx. 55 sq mtrs or 75 sq mtrs)?	Some of each but the lounge in one bed must be big enough for a sofa bed. All flats should have double patio doors onto a patio or balcony. Some suggested flats should have a study.
Kitchen – open plan or closed, with living room/dining room?	It was suggested by one group that the flats should have moveable dividing walls, first occupants buying of plan should have choice of how they want their flat configured.
Kitchens - wall cupboards or all base pull out cabinets or drawers, built in appliances?	Should be a good mix of storage to suite all needs now and future.
Bathroom – walk in shower, bath or both and bidet?	They should ideally have both, i.e. en-suite shower and bath in main bathroom, or two en-suites, one with shower and one with bath.
Storage – built in wardrobes, hall/ store cupboard, scooter storage?	All groups agreed that plenty of storage was required including a large cupboard, built in wardrobes, a shed/lock up should also be provided for each apartment for bikes, tools and possibly a mobility scooter.
Parking spaces/community transport pickup point?	Community transport pickup point near main entrance where people can wait in the dry. Each flat should have a allocated and numbered parking space with good visitor parking nearby.

What shared facilities should the development have:

Swimming Pool	Yes	Treatment rooms	Yes
Gym	No, lots of gyms locally	Restaurant	Yes
Bowls Green	No, lots of Bowls Clubs locally	Library/IT/Social Lounge	Yes
Community allotments/shed/ greenhouse	Yes	Laundry with dryers	Yes
Treatment Rooms	Yes	Pets	Yes
Live/work places	Yes		