

ALDINGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE

Public Meeting - Affordable housing for Aldingbourne Residents

Do people in Aldingbourne, Westergate and Eastergate wish new housing developments to include housing designated specifically for local residents? This is the question which will be discussed at a public meeting organised by Aldingbourne Parish Council, to be held on Tues 20th February at Westergate Methodist Church Hall at 7pm.

A speaker from Action in rural Sussex will explain the Government funding and support available for the creation of a Community Land Trust which can hold housing stock on behalf of the local community and prioritise access for local people to rent or buy under shared equity.

The Chairman of Aldingbourne Parish Council, Martin Beaton, said: “Affordable housing for rent is allocated to those with the highest need from a wide area. So-called affordable housing to buy has often proved beyond the means of young local families. Young families from the parish are having to move out when they set up their own home. One family who had lived here all their lives were made homeless because someone from elsewhere was judged to have greater housing need. As a result local people are having to commute back into the parish for work, for childcare from Grandparents, for school and to look after older relatives. This is not good for families, for the community or society. It places strain on the finances of people who can least afford it. At a time when the health and care services are coming under greater pressure we should be doing all we can to help families support each other.”

He says: “The Parish Council believes that affordable housing for rent, or shared equity housing (i.e. owning up to 49% of the house), should be available in the first instance for local families, or those working for local businesses, managed locally and affordable for local people in the longer term.

This is your opportunity to find out more about this important community initiative, especially if you are in need of housing locally or know someone who is. ”

He explained in a letter to residents that Arun’s Local Plan and Aldingbourne’s Neighbourhood Development Plan propose around 30% affordable housing being built as part of any new housing development. Whilst the Parish Councils remain opposed to large scale housing development because of the lack of infrastructure and the environmental impact it was inevitable that some additional housing will come forward.

He says: “Whatever housing development finally impacts on the Parish, the Parish Council intends to ensure that there are clear benefits to the local community. The meeting is open to all residents including those in Eastergate and Barnham as the problem is applicable to neighbouring Parishes and it is important we work together for local benefit”

“Community Land Trusts are charitable trusts with a local membership. The Parish Council cannot manage such a trust, so it would need to be established as a separate legal entity and volunteers will be needed to help run it, with professional help.”

For further information please contact the Parish Clerk, Joanne Brown, at aldingbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com.