

BUTTERPARK

THE CASE FOR TRANSFER OF ASSET TO IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

Butterpark is the former Devon County Council owned residential care home for the elderly and office base for some Social Services office based staff, which closed in 2014. Since then the County has explored whether there are any in house requirements for the building but concluded in 2016 that there was no demand and hence Butterpark could be sold. This Council has been keen to see Butterpark continue to have a public services role in the town meeting local needs, rather than just being sold entirely for private market housing, when there are a number of developments already with planning permission and others pending.

The location of this site, so close to the Town Centre is vital for our proposal as the inclusion of supported living units, where generally the residents are unable to drive – relying on public transport or walking (although some have restricted mobility). It is linked to a network of safe footways and is part of an established residential housing area of Ivybridge and opposite Duoro Court which provides care for older residents.

In the light of an initial enquiry from a local resident who expressed her concern about a total lack of joined up care for those who have learning difficulties, over the age of 18 and proposing that Butterpark could potentially meet the need for safe, independent living accommodation, the Town Council then explored the opportunities for such a scheme. Over this last year we have worked in partnership with a group with learning disabilities (and the parents); a developer, Brook Housing, Dove Project, affordable housing officer from South Hams District Council, plus local Town, District and County Councillors, which has now led us to making this bid for the land at Butterpark to be an asset transfer to Ivybridge Town Council.

PROPOSAL

The outline plan (attached) shows what the site could be developed as with the mix of private market rented housing at A, B, C and D (the developer has identified a need for private rentals in Ivybridge as we have very little housing available and those wanting to rent here often have to live in Plymouth or outside the town. Block D is a conversion of part of the residential care home.

At E are the 6 x 2 bedroom houses in a terrace which would be Rent Plus and are part of the portfolio of opportunities in the affordable housing market. Tamar Housing delivery such properties in Plymouth, as well as parts of Devon (eg Okehampton) and the developer, Richard Pillar Land Securities has a track record in

delivering such properties elsewhere in the country. (The principle is that people rent a home for an affordable rent and then received a 10% gifted deposit towards buying that home at between 5 and 20 years – Cassandra Harrison of South Hams DC can provide the numbers of people on the housing register if required) (More information on that scheme can be submitted.)

At G and H are the 6 x 1 bedroom assisted living flats, which are a mix of conversion of the existing property (the offices were at this end of the building) and also a new build in lieu of the garage.

At F is the house for training and respite care, but this has been developed further as a concept following an extremely useful meeting with Sara Burgess and Sophie Holmes of Devon Social Services and hence has been dealt with separately in the document "Butterpark Hub" which is attached.

In the effort of trying to provide a capital receipt for the County yet delivering the assisted living and learning house, plus rent plus, the private market property has been included. However this also ensures that it is a mixed site and not just social/special needs housing, which we believe is important. The ambition is to have a mix of ages on site and not for it to be categorised as a care site.

However if the value of the discount offered, was close 75% or better, then it could enable the delivery of the Butterpark Hub as part of the package of development, enabling the Town Council to own and deliver the house along the lines outlined in the attached document without having to resort to borrowing and the consequent repayment of loans, or finding a third party to operate it (with the worry of covering overheads rather than focussing on delivery of excellent services).

Support for people with learning disabilities – national and local

Valuing People Now (2009) is the overarching national strategy for the development of learning disability services. In addition new legislation has been introduced which encourages people to take more responsibility for managing their own lives with the support of the community, to achieve better social and health outcomes, leading to reduced dependency on statutory services.

The Care Act (2014) sets out the vision for social care, reinforcing the transformation necessary to enable greater choice, control and personalisation as emphasised in Valuing People Now. The Care Act highlights the need for more preventative services that help people maintain their well-being through developing more supportive, inclusive and effective communities. It is critical to the vision of the Care Act that care and support works to actively promote well being and independence and does not just wait to respond when people reach crisis point.

National Autism Act and Strategy (2014) outlines that people with autism should have choice over where they live and who they live with. This includes developing a range of housing options including the chance to remain or move into their own

home and live as independently as possible. This is reinforced in the Building the Right Support Dept of Health document so that people with a learning disability and/or autism will be supported to live more independent lives and have a greater say about the support they receive under a national plan. High quality, community based services which prevent or greatly reduce the use of inpatient settings are central to this approach and fortunately in Ivybridge we have the opportunity to explore such an opportunity at Butterpark by working with Dove Project and Brook Housing.

Better Together – the Devon County Council challenge of promoting the well being of the citizens and communities of Devon, whilst coping with far less Government funding, underpins this proposal whilst seeking to provide people with learning disabilities greater empowerment and offering the development of skills allied to innovation and change which can be replicated in other sites in future across the County.

The ethos of the Butterpark project is designed to give choice and control, an improved quality of life and better health and well being. Safety and continuity of housing are important as insecure tenancies can cause great distress and disruption to well being and routines established. The way in which Dove project works by bringing together those people with shared interests, not just putting all ages and all those with learning disabilities together, permits the development of rewarding and meaningful relationships – as well as continuity of a carer who knows and understands the individual.

Independent Living – the management of the property and the support for people

The management of the six flats and the tenancies for the housing would be undertaken by Brook Housing, a charity which is experienced in this sector. They would not be providing the support services, thereby keeping the housing and support with separate providers. They are experienced in the provision of housing for people with learning disabilities and offer tenancy support to help clients to maintain their tenancy. They would also work with those being assessed and supported to see if independent living could be an option for them in the Butterpark Hub, to prepare them for moving into a tenancy. They can help with private landlord rental as we anticipate that there will still be a demand for private market rentals for many years to come.

Tom Plant from the Dove Project has outlined how we believe we can offer a fully connected, inspirational plan for people with learning disabilities at Butterpark (document attached).

In conversation with Sara Burgess and Sophie Holmes we have explored the 3 x i's of innovation, inclusion and independence and the gradual transfer of those on care packages to an Individual Service Fund arrangement would fit well with the scheme we wish to develop.

The intention to have key service providers, like Dove project, who can be the fundholders for the individual, working alongside them to get the best value from their support payments offers great flexibility and better service delivery. For example a person may wish to use their money to go to a football match. Currently that person would have a worker to take them to the match on a 1:1 basis, whereas by working with groups of people and establishing shared interests then three people could attend with just one support worker – their funding then goes further enabling them to do more activities. A pot of money of say, 15-20 hours per week funding can then be stretched by charging a lesser amount to take part in a shared activity and then where 1:1 support is needed then there is the money to do that.

We know that the direct payments aren't always sufficiently flexible so it is vital that from the outset the Individual Service Fund is used at the Butterpark site, as this offers the best opportunity for the individual but equally enables the DCC Care Managers to ensure that the service providers are offering the care needed. There will undoubtedly be systems for auditing the service, checking the workplans for each person or doing spot checks (or sometimes through contact with the parent). This would then mean that rather than having to try and hold annual reviews with each individual, which is becoming more challenging for each Care Manager to achieve, it can become a crisis care driven service. The approved service provider would work within guidelines and can be audited to an agreed set of learning outcomes by the Care Manager with one visit to cover a group of clients, or it could be undertaken by skype or use of other technology.

The evidence of need for the accommodation has been provided by South Hams District Council who currently have 18 people on their housing list. The Affordable Housing Officer came to Ivybridge to do a session with the people with learning disabilities so that they could learn how to register on the website for housing, as we had been concerned that this wasn't currently being done. Letters from parents of adult children living at home have been provided and Dove project have a group that they are working with to start preparing them for sharing a house, as currently there is nothing like the independent living flats on offer in the town.

The use of technology to support safer, independent living is crucial. In the longer term this could ultimately eliminate the need for overnight support, or it could be shared by a group of people (if there was a worker who stayed overnight in the Butterpark Hub). Again freeing up resources to provide more personalised care means not only that the personal budgets offer a better quality of life to the individual but equally it can offer a better work/life balance for staff.

We would also want to enable the tenants to have pets where appropriate – something that is not always an option in private rented housing. It has been shown that owning pets can help to improve mental health with recent research from Manchester University highlighting the value for people with long-term mental illnesses.

The plan also shows a garden area/allotment. This would offer another learning opportunity and can either involve representatives from the Allotments Association in Ivybridge offering to assist or the Dove project themselves have for many years provided gardening activities, either at the allotments site at Filham Park (which can be difficult as there are no toilet facilities) or in the past at Chapel Place in the town centre. It would be wonderful if there was space for Butterpark site residents to have a shared gardening space or small community orchard, with the opportunity for summer socials and barbecues – an option that would be explored.

SUMMARY

This project arose from the concerns of one parent, which is repeated by others with adult children, who worried for the future of their daughter. Finding a safe approach for those with learning disabilities to gain independence but supported by a robust framework of care, offering realistic opportunities for developing skills, being part of the community and experiencing activities many of us take for granted, whilst at the same time delivering in the challenging environment of financial pressures sounds like an impossible dream. We believe that this is achievable and can exceed the ambitions we have laid out here if combined with the Butterpark Hub concept.

Lesley Hughes

Ivybridge Town Council

December 2016

BUTTERPARK HUB

CONCEPT – living, learning, enabling, communication and social well being

The concept of a learning/training house has been evolving but only developed into a broader idea following a recent meeting with Sara Burgess and Sophie Holmes, of DCC Social Services.

Living and enabling

Initially we were proposing that a self contained house could provide a base to develop Independent Living Training with support from a specialist organisation, like Dove, for two or three people with Learning Disabilities, potentially seeing if they could be matched for a shared accommodation option in future (eg sharing a private rented house), but equally assessing if they would be able to live on a more independent basis, receiving fewer hours of 1:1 dedicated support, but giving greater flexibility and a wider variety of life experiences. Compatibility is key and takes an investment in time for the support worker.

The development of skills could take up to a maximum of six months but it is not intended that this would become a long term accommodation option and a room for an overnight carer would be part of the accommodation. It is more likely to be shorter periods of supported living, equipping the people to move on to suitable accommodation, like the flats on the Butterpark site. Brook Housing could also assist by finding private landlord rentals where purpose design housing is not currently available.

Promoting independence and working towards avoiding tenancy breakdown is a key part of the proposal which hopefully saves the need for crisis management, at significant financial cost to the local authority and also the detrimental impact on the health of the person.

Also, during discussions of the Butterpark group the need for short term, crisis, respite or replacement care, has been mentioned as currently there are few beds available but it is unlikely that this would be needed on a full time basis (nor could it probably be funded). Robins at Dartington currently offers this service and it was only intended that the Butterpark option would be offered as a short term replacement care/crisis. The thought is that such an option would probably be on the ground floor in the form of a bedsit style space with en suite facilities but that this space would double as a room to be used for meetings or other purposes (yet to be defined) so that it could be brought into use only if needed. It would have a separate entrance to the upstairs accommodation as bringing someone in who is in crisis

could destabilise the work being done to support people towards independent living and would need careful management.

Learning

The training/skills element was potentially working with groups like Lifeworks, who are involved at Robins at Dartington, but equally other training providers could be brought in to offer skills to people living there, but also who might be living in the Independent units and elsewhere in Ivybridge. A kitchen suitable for food preparation, possibly creating opportunities to provide for dinner parties, or even opening up to offer informal catering for visitors is an option.

Mention has also been made of the high cost of education/social care plans which are provided out of County. Out of County residential colleges are very expensive and whilst can offer valuable training can be a "false" environment as on their return to their home social contacts previously formed can have been lost and the support is then delivered in a different way. This is another area to be examined to see what plans can be offered in the local area.

Vocational profiling and training – working with groups like PLUS in Plymouth would be undertaken.

Communication - technology

At the very least a Smart room, or ideally the house, would be incorporated. Technology, in particular a variety of Assistive technologies should be available in the house to train those on site but also to spread knowledge of how smartphone apps, facetime and various door entry/telecare systems can help. By allocating a part of the budget for the individual they can buy in to the supported services. EasyVideo with bar code scanning technology is something that is being explored in other locations (see Dove Project Connected document) and all these technologies will need to be harnessed in future to achieve the savings required in adult care budgets whilst offering the individual greater independence but with safety and support as needed. Opportunities for securing funding of such technologies would be explored, including grants or other sources.

Social well being

In the talks with Sara and Sophie, we were exploring ideas of a broader use where the community might hire out the ground floor lounge/meeting room for other purposes. We are short of suitable accommodation for many groups in Ivybridge – mental health/well being, Ranger Guide group, Memory Café, Learn Devon (Maths and English classes), support groups eg for breast cancer. Currently some of these meet at the Town Hall which as an office type environment is not always the appropriate space. We could see if Young Devon (who deliver a counselling service on our behalf to young people) might be interested in using the space or for the school to provide 1:1 support for children with special needs who need to be

educated off the school site (previously offered at the Town Hall or the Youth Venue in Ivybridge). There may also be opportunities with the Childrens Centre (based for the South Hams at Totnes) to deliver some outreach services for families, rather than them having to travel from Ivybridge to South Brent.

PROPOSAL

There are a myriad of ideas which warrant further consideration but to achieve all or any of the above the house would need to be vested in the Town Council as a resource as the funding to deliver the services would need to be managed to make it viable and not all the funding would come from one source. By discounting the value of the site then the house could be provided as part of the development, potentially at nil cost if the land value is reduced significantly and then loan debt and repayments would not limit the manner in which the house was forced to operate with running costs only being the issue.

Dove Project would welcome the opportunity to work with the Town Council on the Butterpark Hub, and the Town Council has a track record in delivering high profile projects in conjunction with partners. The developer estimates that the build cost for the house (Butterpark Hub) is around £160,000 depending upon the additional elements that we are considering.

Other social enterprises, learning establishments and the wider community would be engaged in providing a new style of hub designed for Ivybridge, but capable of being replicated elsewhere. We are just at the start of exploring a vision for a local support hub and with the specialist knowledge of Dove Project and Brook Housing, allied with the Town Council's community based expertise could offer an exciting opportunity to pilot some new ways of working.

Mrs Lesley Hughes

Town Clerk



The DOVE Project
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Butter Park Proposal

The proposed development of the old Butter Park site will provide a much needed training and housing resource for people with learning disabilities requiring secure housing in Ivybridge. This development can provide a pioneering and innovative model of housing and support which has the potential to be replicated in similar environments around the County.

Meeting the need

There is a clear need for a development of this sort in the town due to the lack of secure and suitable housing for people with learning disabilities. It can be a huge challenge for a person with a disability to secure a tenancy as a high percentage of private landlords will not accept housing benefit. The DOVE Project have built a network with local letting agents and landlords, but will often encounter issues when supporting people to source suitable accommodation. Properties to let in Ivybridge are in high demand, resulting in a distinct lack of opportunities for people with disabilities wishing to rent their own homes. This development could form part of a wider picture which will contribute to creating the "Connected" network. We have worked closely with an Ivybridge based parent and carer group over the past year to gather information and feedback in regards to needs and aspirations. The proposal has been met with huge enthusiasm and has clearly evidenced need.

The DOVE Project also support several people with learning disabilities currently living within private lets, who would benefit hugely from the additional security and cluster type accommodation and support that this development would offer.

About us

The DOVE Project have over 20 years of experience in delivering high quality, person centred support for people with learning disabilities throughout the County and form part of Selborne Care Ltd. Although we are part of a larger organisation, operating throughout the South West and Midlands, The DOVE Project has maintained a strong identity in Ivybridge as this is where our service began many years ago. The DOVE Project currently support more than 15 people to live within their own homes in Ivybridge, this can vary from providing a few hours support a week, people requiring care and support around the clock. In addition to this, we provide support for over 25 people through our "Inclusion and Training" programmes, delivered from from our hub in the centre of the town. This aspect of our service offers modernised, community based, "Day Opportunities", with a focus on developing life skills and inclusion opportunities.

Community values are at the heart of the organisation and we have worked hard over the years to ensure that our service and the people we support play an active role within the town. We do not own any of our own properties as we believe that housing and support should be provided separately, in order to ensure each person we support maintains choice and control in all aspects of their lives.

The DOVE Project is an innovative organisation and strives to make continued improvements to our service to meet the changing needs of the people we support. This has recently included a significant investment in making improvements to our Training and Support Hub at Highland Street, as well as various positive changes with regards to innovative support delivery. Over the past year or so, we have worked closely with a local parent and carer group who share concerns regarding the lack of suitable accommodation for their grown children for when they move on from the family home. This had led to involvement in town council led meetings regarding the proposed Butter Park site and the design of a support model appropriate to this project.

Support Model for Butter Park Development

As an organisation, we are extremely keen to play an active role within the potential development of the Butter Park site and have designed a model of support that will provide a modern, creative and outcome focused means of support for future residents. The "Connected" PowerPoint presentation provides an insight into the support model which is based around the "3 I's" of Innovation, Inclusion and Independence. As the document details, the "Connected" support model will provide flexibility, diversity and innovation, whilst maximising individual budgets and providing added value. This project is in its early design stages and there is a wealth of possibilities that it can offer. In particular, additional planning and discussion around the Butter Park Hub / Training House will be central to its design. This facility can potentially be used for a variety of purposes that can extend to a wider audience to ensure that the development offers full value to the community.

This project would also offer the opportunity to pioneer the use of Individual Service Funds as a payment mechanism as detailed in the Connected presentation. This system is currently widely used in other parts of the Country, but is yet to be rolled out across Devon, thus providing the opportunity for further innovation within this project.

To ensure housing and support remain separate, all housing relating issues will be managed by another provider. Brook Housing have expressed an interest in managing this aspect of the development and would provide an effective solution due to their experience in providing housing for people with disabilities in the local area. Discussions with Lee Rouse from Brook Housing have been extremely positive as they share the vision and direction of this project, enabling effective joint working in the future.

Please view the "Connected" PowerPoint presentation for more information.

Community benefits

The DOVE Project are committed to providing employment and career development opportunities to Ivybridge residents. This development would provide further opportunities for local people to develop a career within the care industry and will ensure this project has a strong local identity. We currently employ over 20 Ivybridge residents within our local teams and are keen to continue workforce development in the area. We also believe in supporting other local businesses and have retained our head office in Ivybridge for several years.

Over the years, we have also actively engaged with the wider community to ensure the people we support have the opportunity to be included and fully involved within the town. This has included working with local shops, pubs and community resources to create a network that has greatly benefited the people we support. Through our Inclusion and Training Programmes, we are also actively involved in a variety of local community projects which provide people with vocational training and the opportunity to make valuable contributions to their community. This ethos would be at the heart of the Butter Park project to ensure that we avoid institutionalisation and create an inclusive environment.

As this project is still in its design stages, The DOVE Project will continue to develop the "Connected" support model and remain in discussion with the Town Council to continue to work towards making this proposal a reality. By working together it will be possible to create a pioneering project which will provide a comprehensive, high quality, inclusive and community focused housing and support solution for people with learning disabilities living in Ivybridge.

Tom Plant

Development Manager
The DOVE Project

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 19th DECEMBER 2016**BUDGET REPORT**

All the spending Committees have received and considered budgets for 2017/18.

The following factors have been taken into account:

- Pay award for 1 April 2017 and pension increase of 2%
- Reduction in Council Tax Support grant awarded by Government via SHDC
- Most budgets held unchanged, modest increases for cleaning and utility supplies, some reduced (eg Town Hall clock repairs) or increased (eg legal fees)
- Watermark budget approved by the committee and although any shortfall can come from the reserve held for that building, in the past it has, for accounting reasons, been taken from any Town Council surplus, but this year the budget has been re-examined with the help of our accountant to push for even better figures.
- The retention of the Localism budget on the basis that when the Council tax support grant is removed altogether (figures for the next three years taken to full Council in October, as issued by South Hams DC) but by 2010 it is anticipated that this will have been discontinued.
- This need to increase expenditure on areas like Victoria Park where maintenance budgets are inadequate (budget report to Parks Committee attached) – the committee supported a higher budget for the next 2/3 years so a portion has been shaved off the Localism money.
- Some additional legal fees are included to deal with projects like Butterpark.
- The need to factor in any increase above 2% in this budget as it looks increasingly likely that the Government will impose referenda and capping on all local councils in future (not just those in certain bands); restricting any increases in Council tax to less than 2%.
- The recognition that the bulk of the new housing on the eastern side of Ivybridge will remain in Ugborough although the 106 payments to enhance services and demand on facilities will be allocated to this Council, for areas like Filham Park. This could create greater workloads and the adjustment to staffing in the Town Hall is aimed to reflect this but in a cost effective manner. As inflation increases then pay is likely to rise in 2018 then the cap on Council tax will be an issue unless there are areas
- The urgent need to ascertain the future of the Woodlands Cemetery as the agreement ends in March 2018 and the loss of that agency agreement with South Hams would result in salaries of £12740 needing to be reallocated if the cemetery would no longer be managed by this Council. The cemetery grasscutting contract has been extended to tie in with that date, rather than being relet for a three year term. South Hams DC has been reminded of the need to resolve this matter.

Members have highlighted some possible extra funding could be required, for example:

Cllr Wilson is keen to support the youth services and to ascertain how these will continue a meeting with Fusion Lifestyle and Young Devon will be held in the New Year. There will also be the possible impact of the restructuring of DCC youth services into a charitable organisation which may offer access to more youth workers.

If The TAPS fund were successful then £2000 would be taken from the Localism reserve as this Council's contribution towards the social prescriber role, operated in conjunction with Ivybridge Health Centre.

Christmas celebrations – this Council is in the final year of a three year contract with Gala Lights to provide the Christmas lighting. It is not intended to renew the contract because of difficulties and in discussion with the Exmouth Clerk, who also used Gala lights, she has advised that Exmouth and Honiton obtained money from the TAPS fund to renew lights and perhaps work towards sharing them. They use an Exeter based events company and it could be that if more Town Councils work together then the lighting could be shared but we may need an initial lights buy-in sum to be part of the group. This means that lights could be rotated amongst the Councils and deal with the inevitable disappointment people have when the same lights go up year after year. £7000 is in the earmarked reserve for Christmas, which could be used towards some additional lights potentially, to add to those that we now already own.

A recent email was received as follows:

Hello

I just wanted to give feedback on the xmas lights in the town centre.

There has been many comments from people in the town about how disappointing the xmas decorations are. 4 strings of lights for a town the size of ivybridge shows a distinct lack of effort from the town council. I have been to smaller villages such as South Brent where there are much more lights in a smaller area. I can only say that the light switch in was a lot smaller with less traders because people will not want to come out to see a poor show of lights being switched on. It would be lovely to see a better range next year and then maybe residents will be out in force to support the town and its local traders.

There may be other aspects of the budget or ambitions of Councillors for the budget for next year which should be included, and this is the purpose of the draft budget.

Summary

Because of some uncertainties in terms of budgets over the next three years Stuart Wilbur is working to develop a three year budget plan, so that we can ascertain where the challenges will lay in delivering services to the standards this Council would want, but with the potential limitations in new income from development. We are keen to have a session with Councillors in January to look ahead and will

circulate a likely date shortly. This could be of particular benefit to newer Councillors in helping to understand the broader issues, but equally to senior Councillors in planning ahead – potentially shaping our responses on emerging proposals and how to best respond.

Returning to 2017/18, the precept would therefore be £413,766, an increase from £395,386 – a Band D equivalent of £110.35 (an increase of £4.90 per Band D household per annum from £105.45 if the Council tax base remains unchanged from 2016/17).

(If Members wish to add in extra sums for projects then for every £3750 spent an extra £1 is added to the Band D equivalent.)

Members are invited to consider the budget for 2017/18 and to recommend the level of precept to full Council in January.

Mrs Lesley Hughes
Town Clerk