

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

30 MARCH, 2015

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

REPLACEMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to briefly outline demolition works undertaken by Valleys 2 Coast (V2C) and what measures they and Bridgend County Borough Council (CBC) have undertaken with regard to affordable housing.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report is linked to Improvement Priority 4 'Working Together to Help Vulnerable People to Stay Independent'.

'To develop and support sustainable and affordable housing solutions for those who are homeless or in need.'

3. Background.

- 3.1 This report was produced at the request of the Town and Community Council Forum as an agenda item to inform them of the demolition works undertaken by V2C and the provision of new and replacement affordable housing.

4. Current situation / proposal.

4.1 Valleys 2 Coast

V2C have notified the Council that they continually examine the demand and condition of their housing stock. This has resulted in a number of individual option appraisals being undertaken on properties within their estates and in some cases properties have been demolished if this is determined to be the last viable option for these properties. To date, demolition has occurred on a number of estates within V2C's ownership and these are highlighted below:

Chelsea Avenue, Cefn Glas – Prior to transfer the Council demolished 16 properties on the estate due to issues of poor design, property mix, low demand and reputation. Following transfer, V2C's consultation with residents determined that the best option for this estate was the full scale demolition and replacement of the estate. Since 2005, V2C have demolished 144 mainly flatted properties. In partnership with Bellway Homes, V2C are currently constructing 116 units of mixed tenure housing , mainly houses (the majority being for market sale).

Bettws South West – Following difficulties in letting properties on this estate, (primarily due to construction type) and consultation with residents, V2C pursued partial demolition and partial redevelopment of the estate and since 2005, V2C have demolished 24 properties and refurbished 20 retained properties. V2C's current plans are to develop 4 flats and 4 houses on one of the cleared sites with further future proposals for residential and retail premises over the coming years.

Oakwood, Maesteg – Prior to undertaking major refurbishment this estate was considered for wholesale demolition due to property type and drainage issues. However, V2C subsequently opted to refurbish the majority of the estate, which was completed in 2011, with the exception of 13 properties which they demolished in 2012 in order to improve the drainage issues at the estate. There are currently no plans to build new dwellings on the site.

Blaencaerau, Caerau – This estate suffered from low demand with a history of selective demolition prior to transfer. Subsequently V2C have demolished a further 26 properties on the estate between 2003 and 2005. V2C are currently examining options for the cleared land but do not envisage developing any new properties themselves at the current time.

Marlas, North Cornelly – Following resident consultation a number of options to address the problems of the estate were considered and pursued, one of which was the selective demolition of 37 of the worst flats. V2C have constructed one bungalow for learning disability clients and have planning approval for a further 5 bungalows and 4 energy efficient houses. They are currently looking at options with the aim to develop a master plan for the future of the rest of the estate, which will include a significant number of residential properties.

George Street and Tudor Estate, Caerau – Due to low demand for properties at both these areas, V2C demolished 6 houses at George St and a further 2 houses at the Tudor estate. V2C are considering disposing of the site at George St as individual plots for self-build properties for first time home owners. They have no plans currently to develop the site at Tudor estate.

Heol Llwynyffynnon, Llangeinor – Again due to low demand (partially due to the design and layout of the properties), V2C demolished 34 flats. V2C disposed of the site for private market housing with the receipts gained from the sales being reinvested in new build properties elsewhere in the BCBC area.

Maes-felin, Wildmill – As part of an initiative to halt the decline of the reputation of the area, V2C demolished 22 flats. There are no current plans to demolish any further properties, or to build new property in the area.

- 4.2 As well as those listed above, V2C have separately developed over 30 properties of accommodation (a mixture of social rent, intermediate rent and low cost ownership) on their own land. They are currently developing 23 units of social housing at Porthcawl and Cornelly and have planning permission for 18 units in Maesteg.

- 4.3 V2C are also currently re-financing their business to enable a significant new build programme to be developed of over 600 properties over the next 10 years. These properties will be developed across the whole of the County Borough.
- 4.4 Bridgend CBC
In addition to the works undertaken by V2C, the Council has identified and supported a number of schemes for development by other Registered Social Landlords (i.e. Linc Cymru, Hafod and Wales & West) via Social Housing Grant distributed by the Welsh Government. Presently within this programme of schemes there are 70 units of accommodation currently under development/scheduled to start in 2015/16 and over 110 units identified for potential future development.
- 4.5 Whilst there is a high demand for affordable housing, the scarce resources available will mean that hard choices will have to be made in future. Consequently new affordable housing will be targeted to those areas and property types where the need is greatest. For example, given the changes to the Welfare System and the 'Bedroom Tax' it is envisaged that there will be a considerable increase in the need for smaller or single person accommodation.
- 4.6 The Council will also continue to negotiate new affordable housing contributions via the Planning system (Section 106 agreements) on new development sites that meet the trigger requirements outlined in the adopted Local Development Plan.
- 4.7 Finally, there is growing interest in new and innovative funding models that incorporate institutional investment to build affordable housing. While no schemes have yet been developed in Wales, we will, over the coming months, be assessing the potential of this approach.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 None

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no equality implications.

7. Financial Implications.

- 7.1 There are no financial implications in regard to this report.

8. Recommendation.

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Forum note the report.

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Background documents

Bridgend Local Development Plan (2013)