



Press Release

Date: 8 February 2013

Please also find attached a photo: L to R CBH CEO Paul Stephenson, Project Manager Gordon Malcolm, Conservative Party Chairman Grant Shapps & prospective MP for Cheltenham Alex Chalk

Thumbs up to St Paul's regen

"A model ALMO" was the verdict of former Housing Minister Grant Shapps when he visited Cheltenham Borough Homes' (CBH) fantastic new St Paul's Walk development on Thursday 7 February.

Now the Conservative Party chairman, Mr Shapps visit was a chance for him to see first hand the great work housing ALMOs (arms length management organisations) like CBH are doing to build top quality social housing and regenerate existing communities.

CBH's Chief Executive, Paul Stephenson and Stuart Hutton, Chair of the Board were delighted to give Mr Shapps a guided tour of the St Paul's Walk development which consists of 48 new affordable homes, 30 of which have been let for social rent and 18 which have been sold on a shared ownership basis.

The homes, ranging from 1 bedroom flats to 4 bedroom houses, impressed Mr Shapps who commented on the quality of the build and was enthused to hear that all the properties have been built with top eco features including: solar panels; high efficiency gas-combi boilers; high levels of insulation in walls and loft space and double glazed windows.

Paul Stephenson, Chief Executive at CBH said: "This visit was a great opportunity for us to showcase how successful the regeneration of St Paul's has been and we were thrilled with the positive response and comments we received.

“Key to the success of this project has been working in partnership with the local community who have been involved from the very beginning in shaping the regeneration, and Cheltenham Borough Council who has supported us to deliver a project we can all be proud of.”

Cllr Pete Jeffries, cabinet member for housing and safety at Cheltenham Borough Council, said: “I’m pleased that CBH have received this recognition for the hard work they have put in to date. Clearly the endorsement of the former government minister for housing is welcomed and we, with CBH, are progressing more of these projects.

He added: “Affordable accommodation is much needed in the borough and we will continue working in partnership with CBH to achieve improved housing for our residents.”

In addition to viewing the new homes, the VIP visitors also got the chance to see the transformational improvements made to 93 existing homes in the surrounding St Paul’s area. As part of the regeneration CBH developed designs to integrate the existing homes with the new development and Mr Shapps commented that he was impressed how seamlessly this had been achieved.

Reflecting on the visit Stuart Hutton, Chair of CBH Board said: “We hope Mr Shapps has the opportunity to tell many about what he saw and that this leads to support for our future developments.”

ENDS

Notes for editors

Cheltenham Borough Homes:

- CBH is one of the top rated ALMOs (arms length management organisations) in the country. ALMOs are not for profit companies that run social housing services for their local council
- Currently CBH manage and maintain around 5,000 tenant and leasehold properties with an overall satisfaction level of 85%, placing them in the top ten ALMOs nationally

- The organisation's approach to community development and participation; governance and equality and diversity has been recognised as good practice nationally
- CBH continue to develop excellent services by working closely with customers. It will include building new homes and continuing to regenerate communities whilst tackling issues of worklessness and addressing social enterprise

For further information visit: www.cheltborohomes.org

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