

Advance news: Our AGM will be held on Saturday May 18th, 11am-12 noon in the community space in St Peter's Church, Walsden – just next door to our Walsden development site (see below). The AGM will be followed by an (optional) visit to the site, to see how the builders are getting on!

Yes, we've started building

We are absolutely delighted to report that building work has begun on our development in Birks Lane, Walsden. This is where we are building six independent-living bungalows for local older people, to be let at affordable rents. The development – such a long time in the planning – is in partnership with local almshouse trust John Eastwood Homes, who will take over two of the bungalows when they are complete.

The builders started on March 7th, and we had a small ceremony on site that morning to mark the occasion. The development is scheduled to take 34 weeks, which means that the new homes should be ready for their first occupants very late in the year.

Welcome to new members

This newsletter is going out to quite a number of extra email addresses this month, to the group of people who have signed up in the last four weeks as new members of the CLT. We have now climbed from 95 members at the start of Feb to 124 today.

A reminder that the CLT is a member organisation, operating as a community benefit society with charitable aims. If you are not yet a member, please think about joining. It costs just £1 to acquire a membership share. Go online to <http://caldervalleyclt.org.uk/get-involved/>

Hebden Bridge – choosing the right way forward

As you would expect, the CLT trustees have been carefully considering all the avenues open to us for the proposed High Street, Hebden Bridge development, following the rejection (by three votes to two) of our plans at the February planning committee.

We will be explaining the pros and cons of the different routes forward to our members at the AGM on May 18th, and will be bringing a proposal to the membership to be voted on then. As we've said previously, CLT members will have the final decision on how/whether we proceed.

AGMs are member events. If you are a supporter of our aims but not yet a member of the CLT and would like to be with us on May 18th, there is still time to join. If you are a member you will receive the agenda and papers in a separate mailing nearer the time.

Community-led housing in Calderdale

We're very pleased to be receiving a grant of £20,000, from the government's new Community Housing Fund routed via Calderdale Council, to support the development of a stronger community-led housing sector in the borough. This means that we will be better able to support other local community based housing initiatives (such as the rapidly growing Friends of Dorothy group, based in Todmorden). We'll also be really pleased to talk to groups interested in establishing co-housing projects, housing co-operatives, self-build ventures or indeed other CLTs in other parts of Calderdale.

The project will be properly launched at a public event in Halifax in May. More details next newsletter.

Todmorden possibilities

The CLT has been approached by Todmorden Development Board and Calderdale Council and asked whether we might be potentially interested in participating in discussing proposals for the redevelopment of Rose Street and Bramsche Square, right in the heart of Todmorden.

Our view is that, yes, we are indeed potentially interested and will be pleased to contribute our ideas for what is a very high-profile site. It's early days yet, of course, but this is the sort of thing which the CLT was established to be able to do.

Hebden Bridge Signal Box

The CLT was represented (along with Friends of HB Station and the newly formed Hebden Bridge Signal Box Preservation Group) at a recent meeting with two Network Rail staff members. We are discussing the possibility of the building (now decommissioned) passing into community ownership. Everything takes a long time with Network Rail, but the meeting did at least take us a small step forward. We're now waiting for NR to get back to us, and for them to facilitate a visit to the box by our chartered surveyor (our Chair, Simon Brearley).