



News release

Monday 13 September 2010

FIRE DEMOLISHES SAXON WEALD EXTRA CARE SCHEME

Saxon Weald's Extra Care scheme under construction at Gershwin Road, Basingstoke, was destroyed by fire on the evening of Friday 10 September. The development, being built in partnership with Hampshire County Council, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council and the Department of Health, consisted of 64 flats for over 60s with care needs and a day centre.

Construction work had started on site in September 2009 and was due to finish in June 2011. 34 of the flats were for affordable rents, while 30 were for shared equity purchase, none of which had yet been allocated.

David Standfast, Saxon Weald's Chief Executive, said: "We are extremely relieved to hear that no-one has been hurt in this incident. We are of course hugely disappointed by the delays and wasted resources that the fire has caused to this scheme, which, when finished, will be so valuable to Basingstoke's older population."

Councillor Ken Thornber, Hampshire County Council's Leader said: "I am dismayed to hear of the damage done by the fire to this housing scheme. It is a setback to the project which will impact upon one of the most vulnerable sectors in our society - older people - whose occupation of these Extra Care homes was to have gone ahead next year and will now inevitably be delayed."

Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Culture Cllr Cathy Osselton said: "I'm devastated and very upset that this has happened. It is very disappointing that we won't be seeing this wonderful project completed next summer; but I would like to let those people with extra care needs know that this is not the only service in the borough and reassure them that our officers are always on hand to discuss Extra Care services."

Saxon Weald will now be meeting with Castleoak, the scheme's contractors and other partners to determine the way forward and establish when work will be able to recommence.

Site security measures in place at the site included CCTV cameras and an overnight security guard. It was the security guard that spotted and reported the fire.

Any resident who wishes to discuss Extra Care accommodation can call the borough council on 01256 845250.

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Notes for editors:

Saxon Weald is a housing association, formed in December 2000, based in Horsham, West Sussex. We own approximately 5600 homes across Sussex and Hampshire.

Scheme costs: Total costs were expected to be £11.2 million. The scheme attracted £3.1 million in grant funding from the Department of Health and Hampshire County Council have contributed £600,000. Hampshire County Council own the land and have provided Saxon Weald with a 100 year lease.

Architect: PRP

Contract type: JCT design and build