

Council homes to form part of Homes England's first neighbourhood at Northstowe

Homes England, the government's housing agency, together with developer Urban Splash has chosen South Cambridgeshire District Council to provide 81 affordable rent properties at its first neighbourhood in the town.

All of the homes will be built using MMC (Modern Methods of Construction). MMC involves building products and methods which require prefabrication and off-site assembly, with the aim of producing better quality, more energy efficient homes in less time than traditional building methods.

The council will work with Urban Splash to deliver the project, which will include 60 homes specially designed for residents over 55.

All 81 homes will be either one or two bed and available at affordable rent. The apartments will form part of a 406 home site Urban Splash are delivering at Northstowe.

The development, located around six miles from Cambridge, will be one of the largest MMC sites in the country, with all the homes being constructed off-site at Urban Splash's factory in Alfreton, Derbyshire.

The announcement strengthens Homes England's commitment to MMC as a means of increasing building productivity.

Paul Kitson, Director for Markets, Partners and Place at Homes England said:

We support the ambition of local authorities to address housing challenges and make sure more homes are built, more quickly, in the areas where they're needed most.

South Cambridgeshire District Council has an in-depth understanding of local housing demands – appointing them as our affordable homes provider will ensure Northstowe becomes a community that meets the needs of all its residents.

The choice of MMC homes for our first neighbourhood at the new town will greatly increase the pace of delivery and offer residents greater energy efficiency.

Cllr Hazel Smith, South Cambridgeshire District Council's Lead Cabinet Member for Housing, said:

We are really excited to have succeeded in our bid to deliver these

much-needed homes, increasing our overall Council House portfolio. Importantly, working with Homes England and Urban Splash on what is our first large-scale MMC project enables us to offer residents cutting-edge, designer Council homes that will actively tackle the risk of fuel poverty, making them truly affordable for people to live in.

With 60 of the new homes catering to the over 55s we want to work with Urban Splash to develop an exemplar scheme that promotes active lifestyles, supporting residents to live safely and independently for as long as possible. This work will build on our existing community development projects in Northstowe and will support intergenerational relationships across the community. Essentially, all of the 81 new homes will be better for our residents and communities, as well as for the planet.

Nathan Cornish, director at Urban Splash added:

It is our ambition to make modular housing more widely available and accessible to a range of occupiers; we are delighted therefore be working with our long term partners Homes England, as well as our new partners at South Cambridgeshire District Council – to make this happen in at Northstowe.

These homes form part of our wider plans to bring more than 400 interesting and pioneering homes to Cambridge.

Homes England is leading a long-term project to deliver 8,500 new homes in the centre of Northstowe new town by 2040.

It's anticipated that work will begin on the 406 Urban Splash homes in spring 2020.

For more information contact the Homes England press office at media@homesengland.gov.uk or call 0207 874 8262.