

Homes England contracts Vistry Partnerships to develop more than 900 homes across two schemes

- At Sandymoor in Halton, Cheshire, 11 hectares of land will be developed to deliver 335 new homes.
- At the former Lea Castle Hospital site near Kidderminster, 600 new homes will be built.

Homes England has completed the sale of two sites to developer Vistry Partnerships which will see 935 homes be built.

At the Sandymoor site in Halton, the government's housing agency has concluded a deal with Vistry Partnerships to develop 11 hectares of land for delivery of 335 homes. The development will provide a range of housing types, including two, three and four-bedroom houses for market sale and affordable homes in a 100- apartment extra care scheme, to be delivered in partnership with Halton Housing Trust.

As well as using its land capabilities to bring the site forward for development, the agency also flexed its investment muscles and utilised a grant from the Affordable Housing programme to support the delivery of affordable housing in excess of what is required by the planning authority.

The wider 50-hectare Sandymoor site has capacity for up to 1,500 homes, where the agency has invested in infrastructure to bring the site forward for development in phases, with land with capacity for more than 550 homes having already been sold to Morris Homes, Barratt David Wilson and Bloor Homes.

Alongside new homes, the site already accommodates a brand-new secondary school and work is anticipated to start next year on the development of a new local centre to meet the needs of residents. Homes England is now working to secure planning permission for the southern phases of Sandymoor and Wharford Farm, to bring forward further new homes.

In another recent deal with Vistry Partnerships, 600 homes will be built at the former Lea Castle hospital site near Kidderminster, with work set to start on site immediately. The scheme will be delivered by Lea Castle JV LLP, a joint venture between Vistry and Citizen Housing and will consist of one, two, three and four-bedroom homes in a range of tenures.

Detailed planning consent has recently been secured by Vistry Partnerships for the 49-hectare site via virtual planning committee, and this scheme will also deliver affordable housing in excess of what is required by the local planning authority.

As part of Homes England's commitment to placemaking, the agency is promoting adjacent land for employment opportunities, such as a community hub, flexible

office space and a café and shop. The planning application is supported by landscape proposals which include open spaces, play areas, habitat creation and a woodland management plan.

Stephen Kinsella, Chief Land and Development Officer at Homes England, said:

These deals demonstrate that we're continuing to support ambitious partners who share our aim of delivering much-needed new homes. While the housebuilding industry is facing a challenging time, it's vital that we continue to work with partners to create development opportunities like this to help the sector recover.

At both sites we're delivering more affordable homes than were required, and at Lea Castle, development will be able to start on site immediately thanks to Vistry securing reserved matters planning consent via virtual planning committee.

We are very pleased to once again be working in partnership with Homes England to transform these two important sites. These vital developments will provide a range of new affordable homes, enhance the existing landscape and boost economic growth. They also increase the number of homes that we are currently delivering on Homes England's sites to over 3,000, exemplifying our reputation as a leading partnerships organisation.

Vistry Partnerships is absolutely committed to delivering quality homes to help support the UK economy as we begin our recovery and we already have more than 5,000 people working safely on 74 contracting sites and 34 mixed tenure sites across the UK.

Housing Minister Rt Hon Chris Pincher MP added:

Building the homes we need is central to the mission of this Government, which is why we have safely reopened the housing market.

This announcement is a real statement of intent for Halton and Kidderminster, delivering nearly 1,000 homes and new neighbourhoods to be proud of – including plans for community centres and a new school.