

# New homes for adults with learning disabilities underway at Halifax County Court

Halifax County Court is being converted into 16 supported living apartments by Highstone Housing Association, who purchased the building from Homes England.

Ownership of the historic site was transferred from the Ministry of Justice to Homes England, who are providing the funding for the new properties through their affordable homes programme.

In addition to converting the existing 19th century court building, Highstone will add a new mezzanine floor in the roof space to create the apartments and a sleep room for support workers.

Dilys Jones, Head of Home Ownership and Supply for Homes England in the North East said:

“Our ambition is to ensure the public sector land and buildings we inherit support local plans and local ambitions.

“We’re pleased to see this historic building being brought back into use as much needed affordable homes that enable adults with learning disabilities lead independent lives at the heart of their community.”

It’s anticipated that work on the new apartments will be completed by Spring 2020.

Joanne Hawley, Director of Highstone Housing Association added:

“We are delighted to have acquired this iconic building in the centre of Halifax; an ideal location. Our aim is to provide bespoke accommodation of the highest quality, whilst maintaining the distinctive character of the county court.

“Highstone’s vision for the development sees the existing building revitalised to provide lifetime homes for its 16 tenants and a pleasant working environment for the support team.”

Ends

For more information contact Sarah Foulkes, Communications Officer at Homes England. Tel: 0161 200 6130/ 07967 782 162 or email [sarah.foulkes@homesengland.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.foulkes@homesengland.gov.uk)

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## Migration Advisory Committee welcomes salary threshold commission

On 24 June 2019, the government commissioned the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to carry an in depth analysis of potential future salary thresholds and the range at which they could be set.

The Chair of the MAC, Professor Alan Manning, responded to the letter accepting and welcoming the commission.

The MAC is expected to produce their final report and recommendations in January 2020.

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## Chance for residents to give views on new homes for Medomsley

- Proposals for £25m development led by Homes England unveiled to public
- Local people invited to have their say

The first proposals for the £25 million development at Corbridge Road, Medomsley Edge will go on show at a public consultation event on Thursday 27th June.

The redevelopment is being led by Homes England, the government's national housing agency, who are working closely with Durham County Council to develop a masterplan for the site.

Following the consultation it's hoped an outline planning application for the scheme will be ready for submission by mid- summer.

Initial plans include provision for 150 two, three and four bedroom homes on the site, with the remaining land becoming public open space.

Phil Jones, Senior Development Manager for Homes England said:

"Medomsley is well located for local people commuting to Durham and Newcastle and the proposals for Medomsley Edge will help to create much needed, high quality homes in an area where they want to live.

"We look forward to revealing our vision for the development to the community and hearing their thoughts about the shape it should take."

Tom Baker, Associate Director for Savills who are working with Homes England

on plans for the site added:

“this scheme will deliver a positive use for a site which has been vacant for several years; providing new family housing which will support existing communities at Medomsley and Shotley Bridge whilst significantly improving the environmental quality and setting of the site. Previously developed sites of this scale are an important part of meeting housing needs nationally.”

The consultation event will be held at the Methodist Church Hall in Medomsley (situated on Fines Rd next to the ‘Top Shop’) between 3pm and 7pm on Thursday 27th June. Visitors will have the opportunity to view the plans for the development, speak to the project team, have their questions answered and share their feedback.

ENDS

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## [Home Secretary asks independent migration experts to advise on future salary thresholds](#)

The Home Secretary Sajid Javid has today (Monday 24 June) asked the Migration Advisory Committee to review and advise on salary thresholds for the future immigration system, which will start to take effect from 2021.

The Migration Advisory Committee previously recommended that we should retain the existing minimum salary thresholds in the future immigration system, which includes paying experienced workers at least £30,000, and new entrants (including recent graduates) at least £20,800.

The Home Secretary has asked the Migration Advisory Committee to consider how future salary thresholds should be calculated, the levels of salary thresholds, whether there is a case for regional salary thresholds for different parts of the UK, and whether there should be exceptions to salary thresholds, for example because they’ve newly started the occupation or because they work in an occupation in shortage.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

It’s vital the new immigration system continues to attract talented people to grow our economy and support business while controlling

our borders.

These proposals are the biggest change to our immigration system in a generation, so it's right that we consider all of the evidence before finalising them.

That's why I've asked independent experts to review the evidence on salary thresholds. It's crucial the new immigration system works in the best interests of the whole of the UK.

After publishing plans for the new skills-based immigration system in December 2018, the government has embarked on a year-long engagement programme with business and employers up and down the UK.

In the white paper, the government said it would engage with businesses and employers on the salary threshold. Since then, the Home Office has held over 100 events across the UK, engaging 1,500 stakeholders representing businesses and employers. It has also set up five advisory groups to deepen engagement between government and industry.

The new immigration system will mark the end of free movement and introduce a new route for skilled workers which favours experience and talent over nationality.

It already includes measures designed to support business, such as:

- removing the cap on skilled worker numbers
- speeding up processing times for work visas
- scrapping resident labour market tests
- widening the skills thresholds so that anyone with the equivalent of A levels can apply under the new skilled workers route

To help organisations adjust to the new system, as a transitional measure, there will be a temporary work route allowing workers from some countries to come for a year and work, open to all skill levels.

The Migration Advisory Committee is expected to report back by January 2020 when the government will consider all the evidence before finalising plans. The new immigration system will be phased in from 2021.

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## **International Women in Engineering Day**

With hundreds of female engineers helping to deliver our mission both at Sellafield and in the supply chain, we are proud to support #INWED19.

Ahead of #INWED19 our female engineers were photographed proudly holding a 'selfie card' to show solidarity for equality, diversity and inclusion within

the engineering profession.

#INWED19

And this year is a special one for our female engineers as 2019 marks 100 years since the Women in Engineering Society (WES) began celebrating women making a difference in engineering roles. WES are running the WES100 campaign throughout 2019.

This year's theme is #TransformTheFuture and we're holding an event later this week to help celebrate the centenary year and recognise some of our current and future female engineers. The event will feature guest speakers from a range of our female engineers, those with years of experience and those right at the beginning of their careers.

Chartered senior project manager Eleanor Billson, who started her career in engineering, has organised the event. She is keen to not only inspire more young women to become engineers but also to influence gender balance in senior positions and executive roles.

She said:

During my career I've witnessed more women taking up roles in engineering, with some progressing into more senior roles, but more needs to be done to encourage further diversity and inclusion in this field.

As well as celebrating the centenary, those attending will have the chance to expand their networks with others in different stages of their careers.

And it isn't just for women, as men have an important role to play in transforming Sellafield Ltd and the wider nuclear industry, and the event will address some of the pressing issues and challenges faced by our female engineering community.

We're proud of the role that women have played and continue to play in the delivery of our mission. Use the hashtags #INWED19 and #WES100 to join the conversation around International Women in Engineering day on [Twitter](#).