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## COMMUNITY TRUST

### VISION

*"Governance: in the context of sustainability, governance is concerned with care, legitimacy, credibility, responsibility, transparency and trust. When determining the guiding principles for good governance in regard to sustainability, American essayist Wendell Berry argues that people are motivated to care for a home, a house, a place, a community, an environment 'to the extent that their interest in it is direct, dependable and permanent'. Finding ways to encourage and support these pre-requisites to 'caring' – a process of delegation and subsidiarity is the first job of good governance."*

— Jonathan Smales. Beyond Green



*Humans, like many other animal species, are social animals who need a sense of community*

Red Tree understands that development in itself is not sustainable; it is the future residents' sense of place, of community, their involvement in it and the relations with the neighbouring communities that ensures the enduring nature of development.

Equally, consultation is not just about ticking a planning box for future development, but is a meaningful engagement with the people who live in the surrounding areas. It is not just because they are the ones who may be most affected by the outcomes; it is also because they are the communities that will inter-relate with

future residents. They are therefore most likely to best know how to prepare, from inception, the management and social structures of that community. They may also become residents of the new community themselves.

By the time Sherford has fully evolved, the Sherford Community Trust will be an integral part of community life in Sherford. It will own property and infrastructure, have management responsibility over the delivery of a range of services, be the promoter and protector of design and civic codes and the sustainability agenda for the community and most importantly deeply involve community members in its management. It will have forged strong relationships with statutory, public sector bodies, service providers, special interest groups and neighbouring community associations and will be instrumental in maintaining and enhancing Sherford as the exemplar sustainable community that it aims to be.

This Community Trust will be a properly localised expression of civic consciousness in Sherford, rather than a top-down double devolution from central government and will be able to deal with community matters that are either beyond the remit of traditional local government or straddle the divide between private sector interest and town scale governance.

## THE PLANNING CONTEXT

With the exception of the South Hams District Council (SHDC) Sherford Area Action Plan (AAP), there are effectively no direct references in central, regional or local government legislation or guidance to the need for the planning process to deal with the structural organisation of community interests other than within existing layers of local government.

The SHDC AAP requests in Policy SNC1 that Sherford should *"Deliver an appropriate body to manage the community assets for the benefit of the community, promote sustainable living and support social networks within Sherford and with its neighbours (this will be through the actions of The Community Trust or a similar body) and demonstrate that sufficient sustainable sources of funding are available or can be generated to ensure the long term management and development of the community and its assets."*

This is no small 'ask' and effectively, dependent on interpretation, defines the mission statement of government itself.

## BACKGROUND

It was anticipated early on in the thinking behind Sherford that a community based structure would be required to deliver and manage certain aspects of the development that would not sit easily with a developer. Simultaneously discussions were ongoing through a sequence of 'panel hearings' with Service Providers hosted by South Hams District Council, Plymouth City Council and Devon County Council. This included categories of interest described as 'Community Development' and 'Community Facilities and Management'.

The subject fields covered under community development included community facilities and management, library and information services, church-related facilities, public art, environmental conservation and health promotion (for instance BTCV - Green Gym), allotments, and tree protection. Under community facilities and management the range included waste, recycling and organic collection, public toilets,

grounds maintenance, economic development and dog and public litter bins.

It was noticeable how much commitment and energy was given by those dedicating their time to making sure that communities of people had the opportunity to develop in a vital and sustainable way. Also interestingly, these proposals were regularly put forward by different sources ranging from government to NGO to voluntary to commercial, most often with overlapping scopes and demands for financial contribution to support their initiatives. It became clear that there would be some fragmentation, duplication and inefficiency of delivery unless there was some 'joined-up thinking'.

Meanwhile, dialogue between Red Tree, the local authorities and community groups led to the organisation of a community governance workshop, held to try to elicit opinion, profile the level of ambition and develop a coherent delivery strategy of community management in an open and consensual manner. This workshop took place on 10th February 2006 and was attended by over 50 representatives from community, voluntary and statutory organisations

For a full schedule of attendees of the consultation events please see Table 1 at the end of 'Evolution of the Plan'.

The workshop consisted of a series of presentations from South Hams District Council, Devon Association of Local Councils, Red Tree, Devon County Council and the Development Trusts Association. The themes were:

- Vision / Opportunities for a Socially Sustainable Community
- What does a Town Council do and how could a Community Trust compliment the role?
- Development Trusts - what they are and what they do, how are they financed and constituted?
- Community Development – The South Hams perspective
- Information and communications for a sustainable community

The participants then broke up into two groups; one looking broadly at the potential roles and

responsibilities of the Community Trust and the other concentrating more on management structures, transition and inter-relation with other local governance bodies. The outcomes of the workshops inform this strategy.

## STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the Community Trust are rooted in Red Tree's vision for Sherford, the Panel Hearings and subsequent workshops, and are essentially as follows:

- General agreement of the need to establish a Community Trust as a vital component of the long-term survival of Sherford as a healthy and caring community
- That this body should be rooted in the community, not overlaid prescriptively, and should be owned and run democratically i.e. by members of the community and immediate stakeholders
- That this body would manage (and perhaps own) appropriate community assets
- That it would have a clear constitution with a transparent (published) vision statement that includes the philosophy and needs that gave rise to Sherford
- A recognition that a Town Council would also be required and that this would be complimentary to the Community Trust
- That the Community Trust needed to be in the vanguard of the development of the community itself primarily justified by the need to establish patterns of behaviour and social networks from the outset
- That a working group be set up at the earliest opportunity that would become the strategic lead for the early delivery of the Community Trust
- That this body should involve representation from surrounding communities in both Plymouth City and South Hams
- Agreement that from an early stage within the development a multi use civic building should be built to house multiple organizations including the emerging Community Trust and Town Council

In dealing with these types of issues in relation to a development of this size, it is impor-

tant not to anticipate the work of the 'working group' above and to make sure there is enough flexibility to properly empower the Community Trust itself to make its own decisions. The detailed information included in the Strategy, therefore, is indicative at this stage, but shows how the Community Trust may work in practice.

## MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE – INCEPTION AND TRANSITION

It is envisaged that a pre-emptive management board will be created. This could theoretically evolve from or replace the Sherford Community Steering Group (CSG) and Sherford Strategic Steering Group (SSG), which are already in effect the 'shadow board' for the Community Trust 'in waiting'. It could therefore consist of representatives from:

- Neighbouring community representatives in both Plymouth City and South Hams, for example CSG
- Brixton Parish Council
- Devon Community Council
- Red Tree
- South Hams District Council
- Plymouth City Council
- Devon County Council

Other interest groups and service providers (e.g. health, education, youth, sports, recreation, religion, infrastructure/utility) could become members 'by invitation' or have formalized periodic representation timed to fit with cyclical 'review matters'.

As Sherford grows and the Community Trust membership commensurately increases, the balance of the Community Trust management board will proportionally migrate towards the representation of Sherford residents.

## COMMUNITY TRUST AND TOWN COUNCIL

There has been much debate about issues, like 'authority' boundary, the tipping point of transition to Town Council and formal relations with overlapping layers of local government. The

Community Trust has to anticipate the eventual delivery of a Town Council for Sherford and it certainly falls within the boundaries of Brixton Parish, South Hams, Plymouth and Devon.

Red Tree is convinced, however, that:

- it is not possible at this stage to predict accurately the critical mass or sense of identity required to justify a Town Council
- the Community Trust management board itself will want to be involved in decisions regarding timing and extent of transformation
- it is important for this strategy to make possible the opportunity for the Community Trust to thrive but not to prescribe a straightjacket that will inhibit its empowerment

It will be the extent of its ambition and the width of role that the Community Trust achieves that will help define the need for transition into a Town Council if indeed that is a desirable outcome.

### DESCRIPTION OF ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

The areas of responsibility for Community Trust will be limited at inception and as the community grows, enthusiasm for involvement is manifested and additional income streams prove reliable, the roles will be reviewed and scaled up commensurately.

While they may not all be appropriate at outset, the Community Trust is envisaged as having

responsibility, to varying extents, covering the following generic areas:

1. Sustainability – upholding, promoting and progressing the Sustainability Agenda
2. Enterprise – promoting Economic development and events such as Farmers’ Markets
3. Promoting the development of Social Networks (clubs, associations within and outside the community)
4. Design – promoting understanding of the Design Codes, guiding their use and monitoring their application
5. Managing community assets including:
  - a. Open space and public realm (community park, organic farm, greenways, public /civic space and public art)
  - b. Sports and recreation (e.g. Sports hall, pitches, Parkours, LEAPs, LAPs, bowling green)
  - c. Community facilities (e.g.: Town Hall, Park Café, allotments)
  - d. Infrastructure – this may include Energy Services provision via an Energy Services Company (ESCO)
6. Involvement in Affordable Housing initiatives and management
7. Community Investment – where income exceeds overhead (e.g.: community projects, sustainability initiatives, affordable housing)

This numeration is followed in Tables 1 and 2.

Some of the categories of potential responsibility overlap with existing Authorities, NGOs, voluntary, other interest groups and the Town Council (if that should be deemed appropriate). The careful consideration of the bounda-



*Bowling Green: recreational asset embedded in the community*



*Green Gym: encouraging residents to care for their environment and work up a sweat doing so*

ries and extent of involvement will be a key discussion point as the objectives evolve. This will generate a range of outcomes from informal communication links, gatekeeping, sub-contracting, joint venture or full delegation and replacement. Statutory providers are likely to have a significant role in the delivery of certain services, particularly if they have a fully developed resource to do so. Some may work in tandem with traditional service providers where the Trust provides 'added value'. Certain roles may 'internalise' with the Community Trust as its operational strength gathers and the community matures.

### BASELINE OBJECTIVES – INITIAL LEVELS OF AMBITION

It is imperative that the organization in its nascent form is delivered early; the initial patterns of behaviour once established will set the standard and the sense of civic ethos will be easier to ingrain on future residents if it is seen as an established paradigm or 'norm'.

Equally it is imperative not to set such levels of ambition that the targets are unachievable in the short term and the perception of the empowerment and efficacy of the Community Trust is prematurely squandered. While the opportunity is supplied by those planning the community, it is the community itself by its involvement that will generate ownership and the dynamism key to its long-term success. The involvement of residents cannot be presumed and a key role of the Trust will be to engender the kind of awareness and engagement that will be required to underwrite the Trust. The role of promoting Social Networks and Associations will of course start at the heart of the community with the promotion of the Community Trust itself.

It is equally important that the extension of the role of the Trust from its inception is phased very carefully both in terms of range of responsibility and extent of responsibility within each role category. It is premature and disempowering to attempt to prescribe this now however.

Table 1 expresses the specific roles proposed for the Community Trust in the early stages.

### MEDIUM AND LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

As the town reaches thresholds of critical mass, and community desire for involvement is expressed, income streams prove adequate and reliable and the local authority is amenable, then the roles will expand and asset/role transition may have the opportunity to occur. Table 2 below is an illustration of the potential areas into which the Community Trust may have the opportunity or desire to extend its remit over the life of the project.

Some assets may continue to be held in separate ownership, but may derive income to the Community Trust – see Income Generation below.

Some may become deliverables in the event of a surplus of income to operational outgoings.

### THE STRATEGY – DELIVERY AND TRANSITION

Simplistically the Community Trust will need a physical location, management and staffing resource and funds to cover overhead. The Management 'Board' as discussed above is already embryonic, the Town Hall will be delivered in Phase 1 and the Community Trust will have the benefit of a commuted sum secured in the planning agreement to underwrite its proposed overhead over its formative years.

Many initiatives are already in train (for example Our Sherford community website development) and much of the early work will be in coordinating localised planning with external service providers and LPAs. Most of the management responsibilities for assets in the early days will be farmed out (for example wildlife assets to Devon Wildlife Trust, organic farm to an established provider who will guarantee a box delivery scheme, green gyms to BTCV).

Table 1: Proposed Community Trust Roles in the Early Stages					
Role	Sub Set Examples	Possible Responsibilities	Traditional Management	Options	Physical Asset
1. Upholding & Progressing the Sustainability Agenda	Transport – Sustainable Travel Organisation	Promotion - Green travel plans, Car Club, Cycle club, hopper bus. Manage travel section of web.	SCT	SCT	N
	Waste	Promotion - Advice on waste reduction, reuse and recycling	LPA	SCT/ LPA	N
	Energy & water efficiency	Promotion – Advice	LPA/SP	SCT/SP	N
	Health & Wellbeing – including faith based facilities & cemetery	Green Gym, Trim trails, Parkours, edible landscapes	LPA/NGO/ VSO	SCT/ NCO	Y
	Environment/Ecology/Conservation	Ref Open space - themed e.g. Bats, Friends of the Quarry	LPA/NGO/ VSO	SCT/ NCO	Y
2. Promoting Economic Development	Liaison between business, RDA and other network & promotion organization to promote deliver opportunity to Sherford.Provision of office, conference, meeting & training space.	Co-ordination with Red Tree to develop within its remit (or separately) Chamber of Commerce, Fair Trade Associations, Business Enterprise initiatives, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) centre etc.	LPA/NGO/ RDA	SCT	N
3. Promoting the development of partnerships, associations and networks	Liaison between layers of local government, social and special interest groups and networks. Residents Association - Twinning.	Promotion - Engendering Civic pride, empowerment and social networks internally (including involvement in the Trust itself) and between Sherford and its neighbours. This will include events, markets, festivals, concerts etc	LPA/NGO	SCT	N
3. Information supply and promotion	Access to Information. This may cross-fertilize with Library services	Community website & e-newsletter management	LPA/RA	SCT	N
4. Promoting understanding of the Design Codes, guiding their use & monitoring their application	Involvement with planning process. This may also include cultural heritage protection and promotion	Promotion - Advocacy for design codes and aspirations of the community. Co-ordination with Design Assessment body	SCT/LPA	SCT	N
5. a. Managing open space & public realm	Open space – inc Community Park & Quarry	Ownership/management	LPA	SCT	Y
	Footways/Footpaths within green corridors/parks and open space	Ownership/management	LPA	SCT	Y
	Organic Farm – community supported agriculture	Ownership/management	LPA/Private	SCT	Y
	Allotments	Ownership/management/promotion	LPA	SCT	Y
	Public Space – inc street furniture & public art	Ownership/management	LPA	SCT	Y
5. b. Managing sports & recreational facilities	Recreation and leisure facilities – Sports Hub and Pool	Ownership/management	LPA, Sport England, NPFA	SCT	Y
	Bowling Green near town centre	Ownership/management	Local club	SCT	Y
5. c. Managing community property & facilities	Community buildings/Town Hall	Ownership/management	LPA	SCT	Y
	Youth centre & facilities	Ownership/management	LPA	SCT	Y
	Education – seat on the Board of Trustees for the federated schools. Involvement with extended education initiatives (Lifelong learning)	Management Involvement – Promotion	LPA	LPA/ SCT	N
For Key refer to Table 2.					

**Table 2: Potential Community Trust Roles in the Medium and Long Term**

Role	Sub Set Examples	Possible Responsibilities	Traditional Management	Options	Physical Asset
5. c. Managing community property & facilities	Café in the park	Ownership/management	Private	SCT	Y
	Crèche	Ownership/management	Private	SCT	Y
5. d. Managing infrastructure	Water assets (part) /SUDS features (part)	Ownership/management/	SWW/LPA	SWW/ SCT	Y
	Sewage treatment/Bio-digester	Ownership/management	SWW	SCT	Y
	Waste, recycling & reuse	Manage centre	LPA	SCT	Y
	Street lighting, public art	Ownership/management	HA	SCT	Y
	Some utility services (via ESCO)	Supply of heat & energy (community wind farm / neighbourhood/micro CHP)	ESCO	SCT	Y
	Groundworks	Ownership/management	LPA	SCT	Y
6. Affordable Housing	Liaison	With Managing RSL	LPA/RSL	SCT	N
	Property Management	Taking over role of RSL in management	RSL	SCT/ RSL	N
	Ownership	Investing in ownership	RSL/Developer	SCT	Y
7. Investment	Investment of surplus income	Into Affordable Housing or other physical community initiatives or property investment yielding income	Private	SCT	Y

Key to Tables 1 and 2:

SCT – Sherford Community Trust

RSL – Registered Social Landlord

LPA – Local Planning Authority

SWW – South West Water

WPD – Western Power Distribution

SP – Service providers

ESCO – Energy Services Company

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

RA – Residents Associations

NPEA – National Playing Field Association



Farmers' Markets: feeding the local economy...



Allotment: ...and shortening food miles

The Community Trust will eventually become an umbrella organization that will have a number of sub organisations reporting to it, the principle of ‘promote and float’ will be adopted to facilitate the establishment of these organisations.

The ‘Town Hall/Community Centre’ is expected to house not only the Community Trust functions but also those connected community services delivered by other dedicated organizations (e.g. Police, Citizens Advice Bureau, Library) and will include office and function space which can either be offered permanently or variants of temporary or shared use (for example hot-desking). Depending on use, this can be done without charge (to baseline services), subsidised (voluntary organisations providing core support networks) or charged commercially (to appropriate synergistic service providers).

### TOWN HALL – SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

See Table 3.

### STAFFING

The Town Hall will house employees from a combination of Community Trust, local planning authorities, NGOs, voluntary services, service providers and associated services provided by private enterprise.

The co-location of complementary uses and agencies will generate the vitality, cross-discipline support and efficient liaison that will give critical mass to the centre and help properly embed Sherford in the wider community. The Town Hall itself will become a vital single point of contact for multiple services. If the Community Park and public spaces are the lungs the Town Hall is the heart of Sherford.

The co-location and joined-up approach to service provision will create internal efficiencies also in land take through shared space, (for example hot-desking) and shared resource (for example back-office) and is expected to reduce

Service	m2	Floor	Service Provider use	Charge
Reception	25	G	SCT	Z
Common Reception Hall - Gallery/Exhibition	125	G, M	Open	A
Clerks Office	20	G	SCT	Z
Building Management	20	G	SCT	Z
Plant	60	G, 1, 2, 3	SCT	Z
Dedicated SCT / Town Council offices	200	3	SCT/TC	Z / S
Flexible office space - permanent/hotdesk	250	2, 3	Open	A
Police - public access (including safety officer)	90	G	Devon & Cornwall Constabulary	S
Multi-functional meeting rooms	200	2	Open	A
Mini-cinema/presentation room	100	M or 2	Open	A
Storage (including confidential)	150	G, M, 1	SCT	A
WC	60	G, 1, 2, 3	Open	Z
Changing facilities	85	G	Open	Z
Library and Information Centre*	600	1	Devon Library Services	Z
Kitchen & catering manager office	85	3	Open	Z
Café / bar	150	3	Open	C
Sub-total	2,220			
Contingency & Circulation (10%)	220			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,442</b>			
Car Parking - (including 4 secure spaces – police)	12-18		Controlled	A
Secure Cycle Parking	36		Open	Z
<b>KEY</b>				
Charge code – (Z)ero, (S)ubsidised,(C)ommercial rates, (A)ll possible				
Floor code – (G)round, (M)ezzanine, 1,2,3				
SCT – Sherford Community Trust				
TC – Town Council				
* Devon Library Services have some concerns about ground floor access and if this proves insurmountable, then this may have to be relocated.				

Table 4: Indicative Initial Staffing Profile		
Role	Responsibility	Body
Manager	SCT and report to Board	RT / SCT
Reception / admin	Building reception and general admin support	RT / SCT
Community Asset Manager & concierge	Including building & asset management	RT / SCT
Community Development Officer	Cultural, social, event promotion and 'network' liaison (inc Design Code)	LPA/SCT
DC officer	Includes SHDC 'implementation team'	LPA
Counsellor	Liaison with youth, health & social care and Children's Centres.	VCS
Church worker		CTD
Youth worker	Guide role to Management of Youth Centre by youth	LPA
Sustainability / lifestyle advisor	Travel planning and promotion, advice regarding waste, recycling, composting, allotments, green gym	RT / SCT / LPA / VCS
Open space	Maintenance of public realm green space assets, ranger, conservation promotion, Box schemes, tree warden	RT / SCT
Recreation / sports Manager	Likely to be a shared role with Open Space	LPA / SCT
Business development Manager	Liaison with business associations, promotion of retail association, publish 'magazine', Management of office, conference, meeting & training space. Accounting liaison and Fundraising	RT / SCT
Community carer		VCS
Housing (AH) liaison	Most likely embedded role from RSL initially	RSL / SCT
Infrastructure	Initially a liaison role for Community Asset manager	RT / SP
Town clerk		TC
Librarian		LPA
Web manager	Initially Business Development Manager role.	SCT / LPA / TC
<p>Key  RT – Red Tree  SCT – Sherford Community Trust  LPA – Local Planning Authority  VCS – Voluntary and Community Sector  CTD – Churches Together Devon  RSL – Registered Social Landlord  TC – Town Council  SP – Service Provider</p>		

energy use and operational costs in aggregate across the differing services. Benefits are likely to accrue from inter-service communication and support services (which may be a saleable resource) and will be able to be applied horizontally just as early staff members may multi-task and 'event swarm' as required.

The provision of commercially available office space will not only allow for income generation, but can act as contingency to future proof the building against the potential for the role or size of the community to expand.

Table 4 is not exhaustive but indicates the 'partner' organisations that may be part of the wider network of users of the centre. Additional groups not mentioned include: Citizens Advice Bureau, Credit Union, community action and voluntary groups, Public Art South West, Learn Direct, Job Centre plus, Age Concern, Business Link, Connexions, Chamber of Commerce, Youth Services.

Integration of responsibilities across sectors will make more efficient early staffing for instance combining Information and Communications Technology (ICT), business enterprise and workspace leasing roles.

It should also be noted that staffing levels will inversely correlate to the extent of outsourcing to distinct management companies with discipline or asset specific roles. Internalisation of these roles will be more efficient financially but less flexible and the Trust itself will have to judge the tipping point for taking on the permanent resources and commitment as appropriate.



*Café: the fuel of social networks, a good cuppa*

## COMMUNITY TRUST OWNERSHIP, ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND DECISION MAKING

The structural ownership and management of the Community Trust is yet to be formalized in detail but the summary proposal at this date is as follows.

### Ownership

The Community Trust, at end state, will be offered for ownership automatically to the residents of Sherford, who will become its Members. As a dwelling is sold, it will be sold with a Community Trust 'welcome/starter pack'. This may include:

- A Community Trust 'member share certificate'
- Community Trust constitution and role and responsibility
- Masterplan Book
- Sustainability Agenda (checklist and current initiatives e.g. Green Travel Plans)
- Design Codes

Owners of the components that make up the balance of Sherford may also, by virtue of that ownership, qualify for participation in the Community Trust. This will include commercial property owners and tenants and organisations owning, by adoption or otherwise, open space or infrastructure. Community facilities (for example health and education) may also qualify for membership. Details of the proportional scale of ownership that these components warrant are to be decided.

It is recognized that with ownership will come concern over potential liability. The legal structure will protect Members from liability (see below) and the operational risks will lessen over time as experience illustrates that the structure and finances are sound, the responsibilities are manageable and the benefits of ownership over decisions crucial to life in Sherford become apparent.

Prudent governance would suggest that insurance coverage for Professional Indemnity and Public Liability would be appropriate and would increase the comfort of members and manage-

ment alike. The income required to sustain the Community Trust in its initial profile may also be insurable under Business Frustration Insurance.

### Legal Structure

From July 1st 2005 legislation came into force allowing registration of Community Interest Companies (CICs) under the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act 2004 and under the purview of a new independent Regulator who was simultaneously appointed. It is proposed that the Community Trust should be a CIC and as such can be a private company limited by shares, limited by guarantee or a public limited company (CI Plc). By virtue of the structure of this company members liability will be limited.

CIC status seems appropriate for the Community Trust as it will allow flexible operation but at the same time secure any income or assets for their members – in this case the community itself. This is known as 'Asset Lock' which is "a transparent and entrenched way of ensuring that assets are used to benefit the community" — (DTI (2004) CICs – An Introduction)

The Community Trust will adopt a Constitution (see strategic principles above) which will be drawn up over the next 12 months by the 'shadow board'. This will express the mission of the Community Trust to serve the interests of the community as a whole and will not serve an unduly restricted group of beneficiaries. This declaration must satisfy the Regulator's 'community interest test'. This occurs at registration and when/if subsequent changes to the constitution and activities occur.

### Governance and Decision Making

The Community Trust Membership will elect directors who report to the board. These directors must act in the interests of the community and are answerable to shareholders. Given the qualification for membership, decision making is guaranteed to be in the hands of directors who are mandated democratically. They may be paid at a level that is commensurate with the service of community interest. Shares can be is-



Car Club: the advantages of sharing



Box Schemes: fresh, local and difficult to better the taste (courtesy of Riverford Organics)

sued to raise funds as with any Limited Company but dividends are subject to a cap set by the Regulator. Likewise a CIC can borrow but there will be a cap on the interest payable on debt or debentures.

Accounts must be filed at Companies House annually. An annual community interest report is also delivered with annual accounts and records what the company has done to promote community interests and how stakeholders have been involved. These are available for public scrutiny and this ensures complete transparency.

Assets, while locked 'permanently', can be transferred either to another asset-locked body or out of the CIC at full market value to enable the CIC to reinvest the proceeds for community purposes. This is particularly important flexibility within the operating paradigm in order to allow the CIC re-structure its asset base or in the event of it being wound up.

#### ASSETS OWNERSHIP

Red Tree will set up the structure of ownership and management for each of the major assets including all the land that may fall under the responsibility of the Community Trust. These structures will be under Red Tree's control until the assets are wholly transferred or leased as appropriate to the Community Trust.

At the designated trigger point, the beneficial title of the asset itself, or a long lease at peppercorn rent or a designated income from it would be assigned to the Community Trust. Transfer would lock the assets, the lease or the income to the Community Trust enabling it to become independent of the commuted sum underwriting the establishment of the Community Trust (see below Income Generation).

Assets that will be owned or leased at outset:

- Town Hall – entire or space within
- Library
- Town centre public realm
- Youth centre
- Community Park – open space and community farm

- Quarry and greenways as development defines them
- Allotments
- Bowling Green
- Incidental infrastructure (e.g. unadopted footpaths, alleys, SUDS)

Assets that may be developed and owned in the future:

- Crèche
- Community Park Cafe
- Local and Neighbourhood Areas of Play (LAPs, LEAPs, NEAPs)
- Sports centre
- Pool / spa
- Cemetery / Memorial Garden
- Re-use centre
- Groundworks
- Infrastructure (SUDS, wind turbines)
- Affordable Housing
- Commercial space

#### OPERATING COSTS

The profile of operating and asset management costs assumes the early stage profile only and while income streams may be available from other assets, the only assets directly under Community Trust management are as expressed above.

Operating costs of the Community Trust will include those associated with:

- Board of Directors
- Staffing (salary, benefits and payroll taxes)
- Training and Travel
- Office Overheads (including FF&E, IT, web management, printing and promotion)
- Insurance (building, PI/PL, business frustration)
- Professional fees - legal and accounting; and
- All direct costs associated with Asset Management

#### INCOME GENERATION

The Community Trust will need to cover its overhead. It must be certain of that income. It must employ professional as opposed to purely

volunteer staff and these employees must be paid appropriately. It must not overstretch ambitions at outset but must not exclude future opportunities from lack of foresight at outset.

It is proposed therefore that the early stage ambitions expressed above are underwritten by commuted sum (point 3. below).

Secondary income streams, primarily from the Town Hall itself and any other asset owned at the outset, will offset that commuted sum.

Should secondary income streams (points 4-7 onwards below) exceed the baseline budget to cover early stage ambitions, this may be used to increase the expressed ambitions and scope of the Community Trust role.

In this 'excess' income scenario, if the Community Trust management decided they have achieved the full extent of ambition, the income excess to outgoings now generated (points 2-7 below) may be used to invest in community projects/assets including affordable housing.

1. Land provided by Red Tree for Town Hall
2. Building to base fit-out provided by Red Tree
3. Commuted sums from S106
4. Income from community owned assets:
  - a. Rents from Town Hall workspace, ICT centre and Cafe
  - b. Conference space, events income
  - c. Community Park Café
  - d. Fees for use of community facilities (for example crèche)
  - e. Produce sales from allotments/farm/forestry
  - f. Sports facilities – bowling green, climbing clubs in quarry, dual use agreements with private operator/ local planning authorities
  - g. Re-use sales
5. Grants (e.g. EU, RDA, SHDC).
  - a. Big Lottery
  - b. Woodland, farming, open space
6. Covenanted income 'gifts' from:
  - a. Energy - the ESCO holding the ownership of the wind turbines
  - b. Affordable Housing – a proportion of net income from the staircasing pool

(refer to the Housing Strategy)

- c. Philanthropic gifts, charitable endowments, legacies
7. Service charge or precept tax (additional to or offset from Council tax) levied on:
  - a. All residents; and/or
  - b. Key businesses

## CONCLUSION

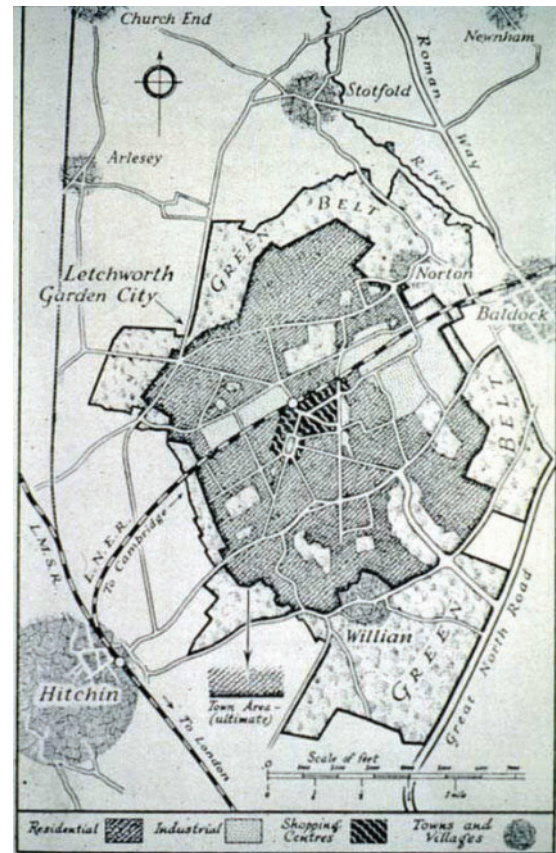
Forms of micro-democracy exist, primarily as Community Land Trusts and have succeeded in various parts of the country including Stonesfield Community Trust in Oxfordshire, Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust in the Scottish Hebrides, and the Countryside Agency and Housing Corporation continue to undertake research and development. So, the concept is not new and flourishing examples exist, but Sherford could represent the first time that the idea has been applied at town wide scale to a new community for nearly a century.

Land reforms in the 19th Century led, in 1903 to the creation of a land society system devised by Ebenezer Howard and applied to the development of Letchworth Garden City. After the First World War a second town, Welwyn Garden City, also in Hertfordshire, was built following Howard's ideas.

The Garden City Movement had an enormous influence on the nation's consciousness but there has been less evidence of the application of civic responsibility as an embedded part of town planning since the Second World War. Those that drive the planning system have, in the last decade or so, re-awakened this social awareness and are making demands on developers to make sure the underlying imperatives are deliverable.

Sherford's Community Trust strategy is an approach based on business principles, to consolidate and rationalise these demands and to provide the tools for a community management structure to succeed. It is a strategy that ensures that the objectives established at outset are level headed and sustainable and are front loaded to set the course of behaviour patterns. It is also a Strategy that allows for growth of

ambition, dependent both on hard-boiled issues like available funding, but also on levels of engagement by stakeholders, principally the residents themselves. It consciously avoids a prescriptive straight-jacket in order to allow the Community Trust to adapt its role as it evolves. Most importantly it is a strategy that embodies the principles, clearly articulated by the participants of the consultation process, of socially, economically and environmentally sustainable development.



Plan of Letchworth  
Garden City.

Source: Professor Simon  
Atkinson's Urban Design  
Theory Seminar Web Page,  
University of Texas.



*Sherford Town Hall: the Heart of the Town*  
*Illustrator: Chris Draper*