

Press release: £63 million boost to speed up construction of new homes in West Sussex

- Homes England to invest additional £63 million for the Northern Arc at Burgess Hill.
- Countryside Properties UK will be the first developer building 460 Homes at the Freeks Farm area of the site – a mix of apartments and homes from one to four bedrooms.

Homes England, the Government's housing accelerator, has today announced a further £63 million investment in the Northern Arc at Burgess Hill in West Sussex, where up 3,500 new homes will be constructed.

The funding injection, which comes from the Government's Land Assembly Fund, will allow the construction of key infrastructure – including roads, a bridge, landscaping, drainage and utility works – to be accelerated at the eastern and western ends of the site, enabling 1,250 homes to be built. From 2023 the centre of the site will then be developed, providing 2,250 further homes.

The news comes as Homes England announces Countryside Properties as developer for the Freeks Farm area of the site. Countryside will start building the first phase of 460 homes in March 2020, on the east of the site. It is expected that these will be completed from December 2020, providing a mix of apartments and one to four bedroom houses. Their proposals prioritise design quality and use of Modern Methods of Construction.

Stephen Kinsella, Executive Director, Land at Homes England, said:

“As the Government's housing accelerator we're using our land, money, powers and influence to make homes happen in the places they are most needed.

“This funding boost, alongside the appointment of the first developer, represents further great progress for the Northern Arc. We can now make move quickly towards starting on site and constructing quality new homes and facilities for the local community.”

Minister of State for Housing, Kit Malthouse MP, said:

“Burgess Hill is a shining example of how our £1.3 billion Land Assembly Fund is rising to meet the challenge of delivering more, better, faster home construction – helping to deliver up to 3,500 extra homes for the people of Sussex.

“It's all part of how this Government is supporting the delivery 300,000 new homes a year by the mid-2020s, helping a new generation to realise the dream of home ownership.”

Phillip Lyons, Chief Executive, Housebuilding at Countryside Properties, said:

“Being able to influence the design and quality for this the first phase of the Northern Arc in Burgess Hill is very exciting. We at Countryside are incredibly proud to be a part of this fantastic project, working collaboratively with Homes England to create places people love.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

About Freeks Farm:

- The development received a resolution to grant outline planning permission in October 2018
- The development will be a mix of 1 to 4 bed homes with over half (250) being two bed
- 30% of the homes will be affordable – 20% social rent /and 10% intermediate rent
- In order to relieve traffic issues, Homes England is required to build a new road connecting Freeks Farm to Isaacs Lane before more than 130 of the homes are occupied.

About Homes England:

Homes England is the Government’s housing accelerator. We have the appetite, influence, expertise and resources to drive positive market change. By releasing more land to developers who want to make a difference, and investing in places of greatest need, to deliver new homes. Homes England welcomes partners who share their ambition to challenge the traditional norms and build better homes faster.

The funding for the land purchases at Burgess Hill was from the £1.3 billion Land Assembly Fund.

For more information about the Northern Arc, visit:

<https://burgesshill.net/housing/northern-arc>.

About Countryside Properties:

Countryside is a leading UK developer specialising in building communities, not just houses.

With over 60 years’ experience, we continue to make a positive impact with regeneration schemes in London, the South East, the North of England and the Midlands, often partnering with local authorities and housing associations.

Our Millgate brand creates homes with exceptional standards of craftsmanship around London and the South East.

In 2016, Countryside was listed on the London Stock Exchange and our robust balance sheet enables us to continue investing in our systems and people and

to support our growth plans.

For the year ended 30 September 2018, we completed 4,295 homes with revenues of £1,229.5m. In April 2018 Countryside expanded its Midlands region with the acquisition of Westleigh Group Ltd, which delivered 1,159 homes of which 92% affordable for year ended 31st March 2018.

For more information see www.countrysideproperties.com or follow @CountrysideProp on Twitter.

The deal to assemble the land at the Northern Arc has been recognised for its significance by becoming a finalist in Property Week's RESI awards 2019 in the deal of the year category. You can view the full shortlist on the [Resi Awards website](#).

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New family houses – including 30 percent affordable homes – will be built more rapidly at a key housing site thanks to additional funding being ploughed into the project.

News story: Standing Counsel for the Comptroller General of patents, designs and trade marks

The Attorney General is recruiting to fill two existing vacancies for Comptroller's Counsel.

The appointments are open to both barristers with a tenancy and solicitors with a higher court advocacy qualification. Although most of the work will come from the Comptroller, advocates may be asked to advise other government departments on intellectual property matters. However, the appointments carry no guarantee of the amount of work that will be available.

The appointments will be for an initial period of three years. There is the possibility of an extension for up to a further three years at the discretion

of the Attorney General.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on 30 April 2019.

Press release: Wreck of Dunkirk rescue boat removed from River Lark

The wreckage of a boat that helped evacuate Dunkirk during the Second World War has been removed by the Environment Agency after it was sadly left to sink in the River Lark, Cambridgeshire.

The sunken 'Compass Rose' had been abandoned by its owner, who officers were unable to contact after numerous attempts, and had to be removed because it was obstructing navigation on the river and could pose a risk to other boaters and the environment.

After several years in the water, the wreck was too badly damaged to salvage and came to pieces as it was being removed from the water by a mechanical grabber mounted on a pontoon.

The 40-foot (approximately 12 metre) wooden cruiser is one of a dozen vessels being removed this month as the Environment Agency seeks to clear sunken, abandoned, unregistered and illegal boats from the Rivers Nene and Great Ouse.

Some of the boats have been abandoned and fallen into disrepair, while others, like the 'Compass Rose,' have sunk and need to be removed so they don't cause pollution or pose a hidden hazard to other vessels.

Most have not been registered with the Environment Agency, despite the fact that boaters are required by law to register any vessel they keep, use or let for hire on Environment Agency waterways. Not doing so can lead to prosecution, a hefty fine and a criminal record.

Paul Separovic, Waterways Operations team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

This is a sad ending for one of around 700 boats that supported a heroic, life-saving effort during the war. It's regrettable the Compass Rose survived that momentous event only to be left to sink nearly 80 years later.

We know the value these boats can carry – not just financially but sentimentally and, in this case, historically – and that's why we're encouraging boaters to make sure their vessels are registered with the Environment Agency, which also means they're more likely

to be well-maintained and checked for safety.

Paul continued:

In each of these cases, we've made numerous attempts to contact and work with the boats' owners to resolve the issues, but without success – so now we're forced to remove the boats so they don't pose a danger to people, nature or wildlife.

Most of these boats aren't registered, making them illegal. Boaters' registration charges go straight back into maintaining the waterways, locks and moorings boaters have come to enjoy.

Skipping out on these charges is unfair to other boaters, tens of thousands of whom enjoy our beautiful and historic rivers every year. It puts the future of our treasured waterways at risk.

As well as helping pay for upkeep and improvements on the waterways, registering a boat means it has been properly safety-checked and insured, making it safer for other water users and the environment.

The Environment Agency looks after more than 350 miles of navigable waterways in the Anglian network, which includes the Ancholme, Black Sluice, Glen, Welland, Nene, Great Ouse and Stour, including locks and facilities.

If you suspect an illegal or unregistered boat on the waterways, report it to the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 or email waterways.enforcementanglian@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Press release: Wreck of Dunkirk rescue boat removed from River Lark

It was removed by the Environment Agency as part of a 'boat blitz' on Anglian waterways to clear sunken, abandoned and illegal vessels