



Building for the future

Final Planning Application Nearly There!

The Exhibition held in the Village Hall on 6th/7th January was well attended and the plans for the project received almost unanimous support. Thank you to everyone who did attend and for your comments. As a result the Steering Committee believes its mandate to proceed with the development has been further reinforced. In response to the principal issues raised at the exhibition:

- 1) It is argued by some that the **new road access** is too far out of the village and should be re-sited nearer the planned new houses. This point of entry for the new road has been approved by Essex Highways as being in compliance with safety regulations and accepted by Uttlesford when they approved our Outline Planning Application. An entry point close to the new houses would be no further away from the difficult turning from Maggott's End and would have more difficult sight-lines. It would also involve the wholesale removal of a large part of the high banking and overhanging trees which form such an attractive and distinctive feature of the approach to Manuden from the north. We will take the matter up with our road consultants again but doubt very much that the case for change will be supportable.
- 2) There were many questions about the **Affordable Housing**. The number of Affordable Houses planned, namely four, was set as a result of the Housing Needs Survey conducted in the village in 2008 and accepted by the English Rural Housing Association, the nominated supplier. It remains the best estimate of the likely need. Two of the four houses could be made available on a part-equity basis but in the meantime, of course, economic conditions have worsened. Reduced mortgage availability has made it more difficult, in the experience of the Housing Association, to find willing buyers who have the necessary deposit and can secure a mortgage. Sadly the rent-only option is no longer as attractive as it was, rents being much higher than they were and tenancies are for a fixed period, not for life. Anyone with connections to the village who is interested in applying must as a first step register their interest with Uttlesford DC Housing Department.
- 3) The Steering Committee remains committed, with Pelham Structures, to find ways to make the houses and community building **environmentally efficient**.
- 4) No clear view emerged at the Exhibition about the external surfaces of the community building so the Steering Committee has decided on "**aged brick**" on all the upper parts of the building - a sample of "aged brick" was on display at the exhibition - combined with **light-coloured wood boarding** on some of the lower parts of the building. The committee feels this is a good balance between an attractive appearance for the building and its long term maintenance cost.

All the other issues raised at the exhibition are being examined by the Steering Committee. A number of good suggestions were made which will be incorporated in the design. For instance, Alison Watson's idea for an outside covered area for pushchairs etc to stop muddy wheels in the entrance area is a winner!

In all 19 people volunteered their help in future, either in fundraising or the on-going management of the community facilities when they are up and running. All 19 can expect to hear from us soon.....!

The material shown at the exhibition is now available on the Manuden village website.

We will now get on with renewed momentum with Pelham Structures to submit the final planning application in the next few months.

From the MC&SC Steering Committee.