



Homes
England

Making homes happen

Community newsletter • Issue 3 • September 2020
Keeping you up to date with progress

Northern Arc



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Welcome

Welcome to the third edition of the Northern Arc newsletter, keeping you up to date with progress as Homes England work to provide new homes in Burgess Hill.

We've expanded the format of this newsletter in order to bring you a more in-depth look at our plans to make the Northern Arc a great place to live. Homes England is ensuring that parks, schools, roads and public transport improvements happen alongside house building, and you can read more about exactly how we're going to do it throughout this issue.

The Northern Arc is a community focussed development - find out about how Homes England will ensure a significant number

of affordable homes for local people will be provided at every stage of the scheme, including how Countryside Properties are going above and beyond what's required of them, in our article about affordable housing on p18.

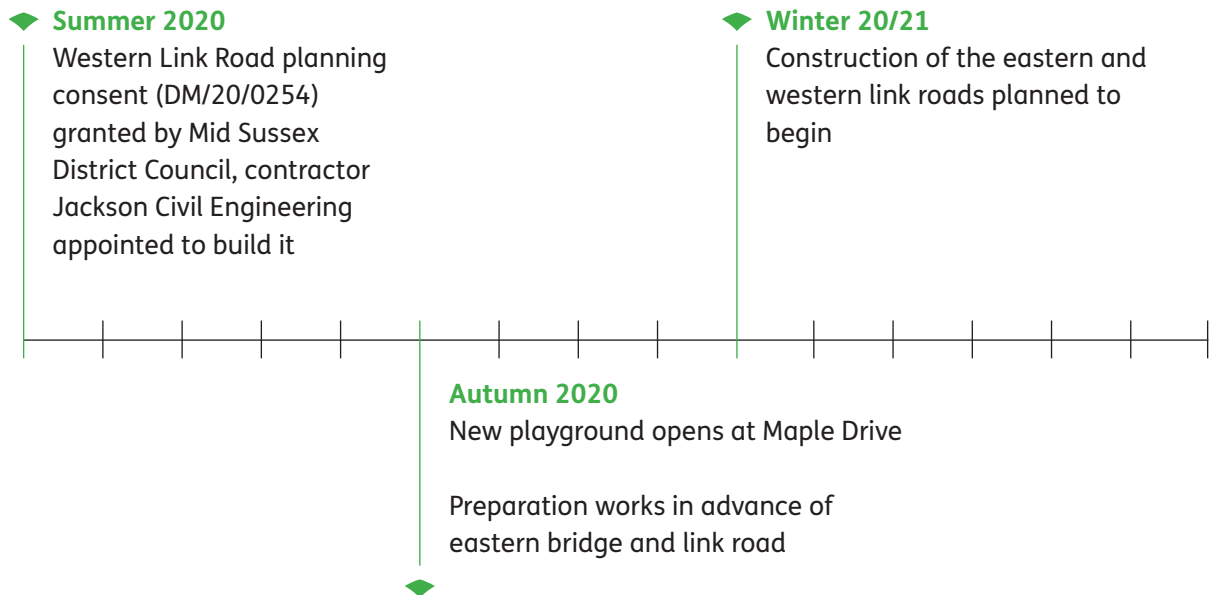
Lastly - thanks to all who attended our first online community drop-in session back in May 2020. We'll be hosting the next one on 15th September at 6.30pm. Ask us your questions before or during the event at <https://bit.ly/Northern-Arc-15-September> and we'll make sure we respond to every one.

Ken Glendinning
Project Director,
Homes England



Development timeline

Progress at the Northern Arc



COVID-19 update

Working safely for long-term success

Homes England is adhering to Government guidance relating to COVID-19 and is supporting Government at this difficult time. Homes England is open for business and continuing to invest in its development pipeline. This will help to give the housing sector some certainty as it rebuilds its capacity.

The Northern Arc is a long-term project which will be built between 2020 and 2033. This allows

flexibility for Homes England to appoint developers and contractors at the right speed.

Developers and contractors working at the Northern Arc are strictly adhering to Government and industry guidance in relation to COVID-19.

ARTICLE 1

Parks and open spaces

Part of what brings a community together is the quality of the public space it shares.

The importance of access to green space has become clear this year throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with public parks becoming increasingly important as safe spaces for everyone to enjoy.

People who spend time in nature and feel connected to it – whether that’s through wild walks on the South Downs or in the park across the road – notice significant and long-lasting improvements to their mental and physical health.

Every resident of Burgess Hill will be able to get to know the Northern Arc through the 82 hectares of ‘green infrastructure’ built into the heart of the plan – that’s woodland, sports pitches, grassland,

parks and designated play areas. Green spaces will connect areas of the development together internally and provide links to the rest of Burgess Hill including an extension to the Green Circle network.

The Northern Arc is required to create a 10% biodiversity net gain (an approach that leaves nature in a better state after the development than it was in before). As well as protecting all the ancient woodland on the site, areas have been identified to plant new trees and shrubs, create new ponds and protect habitats for native plants and animals.



◆ Ancient woodland at the Northern Arc

As well as making pleasant spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy, the network of green spaces throughout the Northern Arc will create new habitat for native wildlife.

Green public space will run across the whole of the Northern Arc, but there are also three neighbourhood parks that will be newly created, along with the enhancement and protection of the landscape of Lowlands Farm.

The parks will be near the three Neighbourhood Centres - focal points for the community which will contain shops, schools and community spaces.

While developer partners will provide detailed designs of the parks as they join the project, the key features are set out in the Design Guide, which you can see on the Project Library at the Northern Arc web page (details at the end of this article).

All these parks will be designed to be accessible to everyone – with footpaths, benches, signs and other street furniture planned accordingly.

Eastern Neighbourhood Park

This will be the first park created on the site, with work due to start in 2022. It's adjacent to the Eastern Neighbourhood Centre and will be close to the new secondary school. It sits above the river valley and will contain all the mature trees that are already thriving in that location, as well as new trees and shrubs. The Green Circle will lead directly to and through the park, making sure it's easy to access on foot and by bicycle for residents across the town.

The Eastern Neighbourhood Park will be designed to include existing landscape features to create a park with opportunities for play and recreation. There will be a play area with play equipment suitable for younger children (up to 12 years old),

and also a Multi-Use Games Area which will be laid out more formally with courts and pitches. Cycle parking will be provided close to the play area and other key locations in the park.

Western Neighbourhood Park

The Western Neighbourhood Park will have a focus on ecology, including a community orchard, allotments and a community growing area. There will also be educational areas such as pond dipping platforms and bug hotels. The Northern Arc green spaces will be carefully designed to maximise opportunities for people to get to know their local environment, habitats and wildlife whilst making sure they are sustainable, rich habitats for thriving ecosystems to establish

Existing mature trees will be incorporated into neighbourhood parks



and grow. We recognise the many benefits that come from people understanding, enjoying and protecting the natural environment. The Western Neighbourhood Park will offer fantastic opportunities for residents of Burgess Hill to get active in the outdoors and enjoy spending time in nature.

Central Neighbourhood Park

The site which will become the Central Neighbourhood Park already contains grassland, mature trees and hedgerows, all of which will be kept. A section of this park area floods periodically, so the environmental features that already exist here will be used to create an informally-planted park with areas of important wet woodland

habitat, maintained by carefully designed natural drainage and irrigation. There will be play areas and cycle parking, as at the Eastern Neighbourhood Park.

For more information about parks and open spaces at the Northern Arc, please see pages 118-127 of the Design Guide, a document featured in the Northern Arc Project Library at burgesshill.net and also on the Mid Sussex District Council planning portal at midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building.

Locations of 'green infrastructure' at the Northern Arc





ARTICLE 2

Schools

Homes England's involvement in the Northern Arc ensures the delivery of a community, not just homes. **Schools are a part of that.**

The involvement of Homes England at the Northern Arc ensures that infrastructure is delivered in tandem with new homes.

So, as well as meeting the day-to-day needs of Burgess Hill residents by providing three neighbourhood centres, three neighbourhood parks, a Centre for Outdoor Sport and large amounts of public open space and walking and cycling routes, the development will also provide three new schools for the area: two primary schools with two tutor groups per year and a secondary school with up to eight tutor groups per year.

These schools are in addition to the existing St Paul's Catholic College and the proposed relocation

of St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, meaning that when the development is finished, there will be five local schools in the area.

The two new primary schools will be built by contractors appointed by Homes England. The new secondary school will be developed by West Sussex County Council, with Homes England providing land for the school and making a significant financial contribution towards the cost of the facility and towards local off-site sixth form provision. The secondary school and one of the primary schools will be completed as part of Phase 1 of the development (2020-2025).

ARTICLE 3

Highways infrastructure

Keeping traffic flowing at the Northern Arc and surrounding area.

Homes England are working alongside Mid Sussex District Council, West Sussex County Council and Highways England to build new roads and improve existing ones in and around the Northern Arc.

The eastern bridge and link road will connect Isaacs Lane with Maple Drive via the Freeks Farm construction site where Countryside are building the first homes at the Northern Arc. Completion of this link road will allow all construction traffic to access the Northern Arc's eastern development plots from Isaacs Lane - avoiding Maple Drive, a predominantly residential road. As the eastern plots are built and occupied, the eastern bridge and link road will provide access for residents and visitors by car, bicycle or on foot. It will also provide a through route for buses and help to deliver the early stages of a comprehensive four-phase public transport strategy.

Initial construction work for the eastern bridge and link road will begin this winter. The work will be carried out for us by John Sisk and Son.

The western link road will join Jane Murray Way to the western part of the Northern Arc. Following planning consent (DM/20/0254) granted in July 2020, Jackson Civil Engineering have recently been announced as the contractor in charge of the work, and you can read more about them and Sisk in our 'Introductions' section on the following pages.

Homes England's remit at the Northern Arc is to deliver a sustainable community, and travel infrastructure is a major part of that plan. As well as the new link roads and the Northern Arc avenue, contributions will be made towards capacity improvements at key junctions including Sussex Way, Jane Murray Way, York Road and Coulstock Road. A contribution of almost £3 million has also already been made towards the West Sussex County Council-led A2300 dualling scheme. Pedestrian and cycle routes will also form a major part of the road design process, making sure everyone can travel safely.

You can find out more about roads and transport plans for the Northern Arc at burgesshill.net/housing/northern-arc/faqs/.



An illustrative sketch of the Western Bridge



Developer introductions: Countryside Properties



Countryside is the first housebuilder to be appointed at the Northern Arc, and will be building 460 homes in the Freeks Farm area to the east of the site.

Countryside is highly experienced when it comes to large scale sites. One of its landmark developments, Azure, is a mixed-use scheme that sits on the banks of the River Medway at St Mary's Island, Kent. With the final phase due to go on the market this year, the 25-year regeneration project has developed the island into a thriving and mature community and neighbourhood. Through clever house design and extensive landscaping, Countryside has created a legacy that allows residents to feel at home and visitors to feel welcome.

Countryside is the UK's leading mixed-tenure developer through its two divisions: Partnerships and Housebuilding. In March 2020, it was awarded

the 5 Star Rating by the Home Builders Federation following the latest home building industry's Customer Satisfaction Survey. They have been selected as a development partner by Homes England to deliver the first phase of the Northern Arc at Freeks Farm, called 'Oakhurst'. This will be 460 new homes, from one-bedroom apartments to four-bedroom houses.

Countryside will be producing high-quality buildings and considered landscaping. They will also be using environmentally-friendly timber frame construction and an off-site manufactured building system, keeping environmental responsibility at the forefront of what they do. The first properties are expected to launch to the market in Spring 2021, with a four-year build programme to complete all 460 properties.

For more information visit countrysideproperties.com, or twitter [@CountrysideProp](https://twitter.com/CountrysideProp).

Countryside's new access road from Maple Drive



Contractor introductions: John Sisk & Son



Sisk will be building the eastern bridge and link road joining Freeks Lane to Isaacs lane, providing pedestrian and vehicle access to the eastern part of the site.

John Sisk & Son is an innovative international construction and engineering company with a long-term vision. Sisk employs approx. 1,700 people across its operations in Ireland, the UK and Europe. A fifth-generation, family-owned Irish business, they take pride in the communities that they work in. The contractor has been working on the redevelopment of Wembley Park for the past 15 years and throughout this period they have built a network of relationships in the community of Brent. Sisk won the Pride of Brent Award in 2017 for their relationship with local charity Sufra, who seek to address the causes and consequences of poverty in the area.

Another example where the company has excelled at community relations was on their Mountain Ash project in Wales. The Sisk team built up a close relationship with the local community, learning about their specific requirements by involving themselves in local initiatives.

Sisk have worked on a number of high-profile jobs in the south including Crossrail tunnelling works, the development at White City in London and a new housing development in Chatham Docks. Sisk are currently on site for Homes England carrying out the infrastructure works at their Northstowe development near Cambridge.

For more info see www.johnsiskandson.com, follow them on Twitter @JohnSiskandSon or on LinkedIn at John Sisk & Son Ltd.

Artist sketch of the eastern bridge and link road



Contractor introductions: Jackson Civil Engineering



Jackson Civil Engineering have recently been awarded a contract to design and build the western link road which will allow access to the Northern Arc from the A2300.

The works include the construction of a new roundabout on the A2300, a new roundabout on the A273 (Jane Murray Way) and a link road between the two new roundabouts. The contract also includes the design of a bridge across the river Adur and new footpaths and cycle ways.

Jackson Civil Engineering are well-known for delivering road infrastructure throughout the country for clients like Highways England, Connect Plus (M25) and West Sussex Highways. They are currently carrying out the dualling of the A2300 from the A23 to the Northern Arc Roundabout for West Sussex County Council. Jackson's are

also currently working with the County Council on future road schemes in the county including the Lyminster by-pass & the upgrading of the A29.

Jackson Civil Engineering are a national civil engineering contractor who operate through a number of regional offices across the country. It is very important to Jackson's to maintain its regional "feel" by employing local staff which helps promote a sense of ownership in communities where the works take place, as well as ensuring a good work/life balance amongst their employees. Above all, Jackson's pride themselves on a great work ethic and doing a good job first time.

A previous project by Jackson



ARTICLE 4

Meet the team

It takes a lot of people to bring this many homes to life.



Lisa Palframan is Senior Planning & Enabling Manager for Environment at Homes England

What do you do on the project?

I lead on environmental matters at the Northern Arc, focusing particularly on landscape, open spaces such as the parks, and on ecology. I provide direction to our technical consultants to make sure that we plan for a high quality scheme that both Homes England and the community can be proud of. I also talk to different individuals and groups with an interest in the environment, ecology and open spaces, to ensure we take on board their views when we develop and deliver our plans.

What have been the best bits so far?

Working as a team on the biodiversity calculations that have informed our net gain approach has been a highlight. I realised early on that robust biodiversity calculations could give assurance to the local community that our plans will support more wildlife on site once the scheme is built than is already there. It's been exciting to see how different parts of our plans, such as the parks and woodland planting, contribute to net gain.

Also, getting the outline planning application submitted and approved was an important highlight, as we felt we'd developed really good proposals that made the best of the site's features and protected the sensitive ecology. We had a large team of ecologists who spent over 2400 person hours carrying out surveys on site, meaning we could properly understand the wildlife living there and develop the best approach to protect the different species and habitats.



Ken Glendinning is Project Director for the Northern Arc at Homes England

What do you do on the project?

I'm Project Director for Large Sites at Homes England, with strategic responsibility for project management and delivery. I agreed terms with the landowners and land agents to acquire the land at the Northern Arc and secured significant investment from the Government to fund roads and other infrastructure at the site. I also led on the successful planning application for the scheme and put in place the strategy for how the development will be constructed over the next 10 years.

What have been the best bits so far?

Large projects like the Northern Arc are high-profile, require significant financial investments and need careful, considered management. Whilst I really enjoy that role, for me the best part about the job is being able to help make schemes like this happen when otherwise they would have stalled and the opportunity to own a new affordable home and local job would have been lost for local people. I am proud to lead a team for this project that will over the next few years provide significantly more affordable housing than was originally planned and also be able to put in place safeguards for the environment that will secure a lasting increase in biodiversity for Burgess Hill.

“I am proud to lead a team for this project that will provide significantly more affordable housing than was originally planned”



Susanna Strandell is a Senior Planning and Enabling Manager at Homes England

What do you do on the project?

Whilst my focus is on the planning process and getting consents for our proposals, my job is so much more than that. I help to provide oversight of all the many different work streams needed to bring forward such a complex development: housing including affordable housing, ecology, masterplanning and open space, health provision, sports and community development to name but a few. I work very closely with all of our partners in the District and County Councils, and many others.

What have been the best bits so far?

Having worked in a civil service bubble for many years, I feel privileged to now be working on a 'real world' project, creating a place people will be calling their home. It is a huge responsibility making sure that all pieces fall into place – and in the right order. Place-making is a word being used to describe what we are doing because it is so much more than simply building houses. Having joined the team about 5 months ago, I am hugely impressed by the dedication, professionalism and care taken in areas such as ecology and the environment – we're even building a bridge for dormice!

Check the next issue of the Community Newsletter to find out more about the Northern Arc team.



ARTICLE 4

Affordable housing

Homes that are affordable to all What does that mean at the Northern Arc?

The Northern Arc will be a community focused development that meets the housing needs of local people.

In an area of high house prices due to in part to excellent commuting links with London and Brighton, some local residents are priced out of the open market. Homes England is working closely with Mid Sussex District Council as the local housing authority to make sure homes are provided that are affordable to all. At least 30% of every phase of homes at the Northern Arc will be affordable – with that 30% split into a ratio of 75% affordable rental homes and 25% shared ownership.

Countryside Properties is the first developer to build homes at the Northern Arc. They have been on site since early 2020 and will start building houses at Freeks Farm in autumn this year. As a direct response to the COVID-19 situation, Countryside

will be making over 50% of the homes at Freeks Farm affordable – 20% more than is required by the conditions of their planning consent and a total of 237 properties. The first of these are expected to be available in spring 2021 and will range in size from one to four bedroom family homes, including properties reserved for those aged 55 and over, and four fully wheelchair-accessible homes.

Construction of homes at the Northern Arc will be ‘tenure blind’ – this means that homes destined for affordable rent or shared ownership will be built to the same high standards as those destined for private sale and distributed throughout the development. This includes the landscaping, look and feel of the surrounding areas too.

Who is it for?

Affordable housing is provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. Whether or not a household is eligible for affordable housing is determined by the income of the household considered against local house prices. The list of people awaiting access to affordable homes is maintained by Mid Sussex District Council.

Shared ownership

Often called part-buy, part-rent, with shared ownership the purchaser buys a proportion of the value of the home and the remaining share is kept by the freeholder which is usually a registered housing provider. The purchaser then pays subsidised rent on the remainder of the value of the home. The proportion of the value of the home is not fixed in advance, but specific buyers are offered a share that fits their personal circumstances – between 25% and 75% of the full value. These homes are available to households on the Help to Buy Register for Mid Sussex. When a buyer chooses to sell their share of their home and move on, that home must remain affordable to the next buyer.

Social rented housing

Owned by Mid Sussex District Council or registered providers such as housing associations, guidelines for rents are determined through the Government's rent policy.

Affordable rented housing

Affordable rent is let by Mid Sussex District Council or private providers such as housing associations to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable rent is subject to rent controls which mean it can't cost more than 80% of the local market rate or the Local Housing Allowance for the size of unit, whichever is lower.

Find out more

People interested in affordable housing provision at the Northern Arc should visit the Mid Sussex District Council website at midsussex.gov.uk/housing-council-tax/apply-for-social-housing/. The first open market sale properties will be available later in 2021 – contact Countryside properties on 01732 747 010 or via their website at countrysideproperties.com.



Northern Arc virtual drop-in

Our next community drop-in session will be held on 15th September at 6.30pm, where we will provide an update on progress at the Northern Arc. We'll be streaming the presentation and you will be able to view it in a web browser, or via the MS Teams app on iphone, ipad or android.

<https://bit.ly/Northern-Arc-15-September>

You're welcome to submit questions at that link before or during the event - any that we don't manage to answer during the live session we will respond to via a Q&A document. You can read the Q&As from the last drop in on 5 May at:

burgesshill.net/housing/northern-arc/

Visit our new Facebook page

Stay up-to-date with the latest Northern Arc news! We're now on Facebook, where you can find out what's happening and get in touch.

 [northern.arc.BH](https://www.facebook.com/northern.arc.BH)

Accessibility statement

We want to be accessible to all. If you would like to receive this newsletter content in a different format, or have accessibility requirements in order to join the virtual drop-in session, please contact us.

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