



Homes
England

Making homes happen

Community newsletter · Issue 8 · February 2022
Keeping you up to date with progress

Northern Arc



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Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of the Northern Arc newsletter.

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself - I've recently taken on the role of Project Director for the Northern Arc. It's a really interesting project to be getting involved with, and I'm looking forward to working closely with the team and Homes England's partners. If you have any questions or comments, please do get in touch using the contact details on the back page of this newsletter.

In this issue of the Northern Arc newsletter we have updates from our contractors on the vital infrastructure they're providing, including the link roads which will provide access to the site.

The very first homes will soon be ready, and we hear from Countryside about their progress and the sustainable methods of construction they're using to reduce the carbon footprint of the homes they're building.

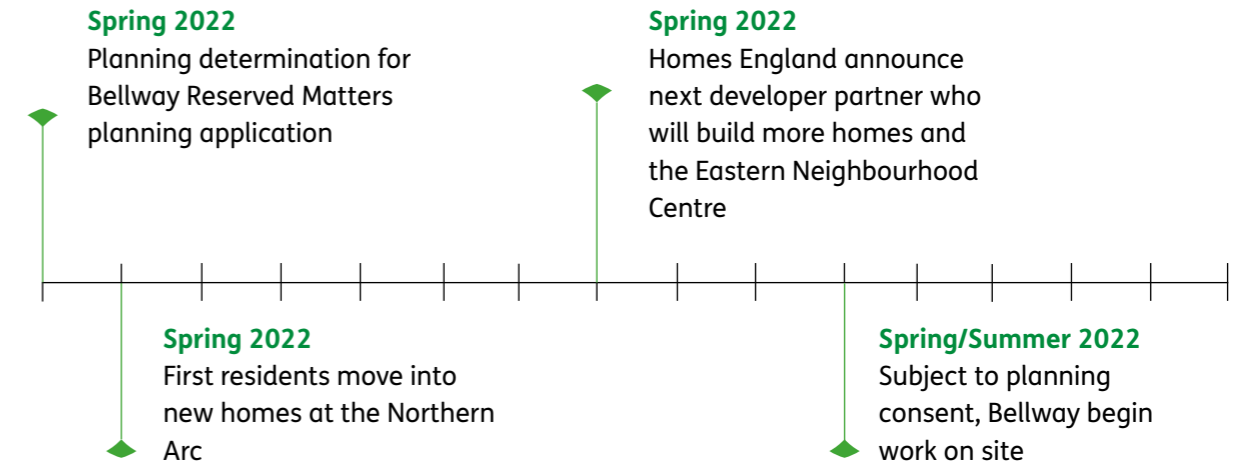
Bellway also detail the design for the extension to Bedeland's nature reserve that they've included in their Reserved Matters planning application, and you can read more about how Homes England is committing to providing jobs and training in your local economy.

Graham Hyslop
Project Director,
Homes England



Cover image: Arnie the Great Crested Newt detection dog during ecology surveys at the Western link Road

Development timeline Progress at the Northern Arc - update



Ecology update Newt detection dogs

This issue's cover star is Arnie, the Great Crested Newt detection dog! Arnie lives with Wagtail detection dogs - where rescued dogs are trained to detect all kinds of things, from tobacco to explosives, cash and even people. But Arnie is trained to find an altogether more slippery customer.

Great Crested Newts are a protected species, and our ecologists identified possible newt habitat at the site of the Western Link Road. Despite other survey methods not finding any newts, Arnie's nose was put to good work to confirm this result.

Read the full story at:
burgesshill.net/housing/northern-arc/news



Developer update: Countryside properties



Countryside Properties was the first housebuilder to be appointed at the Northern Arc and are building 460 homes, over 50% of them as affordable housing. The first affordable homes are expected to be ready in Spring 2022 and the first homes for sale on the private market in Winter 2022.

Since our previous update, Countryside have opened the children’s playground on Maple Drive for the local community to enjoy. The 2,700sqm recreation area includes an activity area, play equipment, a Multi-Use Games Area, seating and landscaping. The playground features include swings, a trampoline, zip wire, full basketball court and a timber climbing frame with a surrounding landscaped lawn.

Progress has been made on the first phase of housing and all buildings in this phase are now in construction. Apartment blocks have been built to roof level, with a significant number having plumbing and electrics now too. The remaining timber frames for homes to the south of the site will be arriving soon.

To the north of the site, piling works are now completed for the first three plots in preparation

for laying foundations. Works to the bridge are finished and the site compound has been relocated to the northern section. Replanting work will take place later in the year to make this waterside area of the site wildlife-friendly. Works to the spine road, which runs north to south through the Countryside site, are continuing and the ground has been prepared and levelled.

The first phase of homes, all of which are affordable housing and delivered by Sage Housing, are expected to be ready for people to move in by Spring this year. They will range from one-bedroom apartments to four-bedroom family homes, including properties for those aged 55 plus and fully wheelchair-accessible homes. There will be a mixture of homes for rent and for shared ownership (part-buy, part-rent).

If you would like to find out whether you qualify for affordable housing, please visit midsussex.gov.uk/housing-council-tax/apply-for-social-housing

If you would like to know more about buying a property on the private market, you can register your interest at countrysideproperties.com



Clockwise from top: Maple Drive Play Area opening; interiors of new homes are being fitted out; a view of one of the apartment blocks; the spine road under construction, looking south

Developer update: Bellway



Bellway are the latest developer to join the Northern Arc. They will build homes to the east of the site and develop some public open spaces including the Lowlands Farm extension to the Bedelands Nature Reserve.

Bellway and Homes England have jointly submitted a reserved matters planning application seeking approval for the detailed design and landscaping of 247 homes to be built on land to the east of Isaacs Lane and at Lowlands Farm. The application also includes sections of the Green Circle footpath and cycle route, and an extension to Bedelands Nature Reserve.

The application was received by Mid Sussex District Council on 5th November 2021 and it is expected that the Council will make their decision in the spring with construction beginning shortly after, subject to the application being approved.

The reserved matters application includes details of a proposed extension to Bedelands Nature Reserve. This covers a 13 hectare rectangular area of land extending east from Freeks Lane and

south from the River Adur towards Lowlands Farm. This area covers both open meadow grassland and Ancient Woodland.

While the extension of the nature reserve will allow new and existing residents to enjoy more access to open space, it's important that the valuable habitat at this location is also protected and the plants and animals that thrive there are able to continue to do so. To achieve this delicate balance, the number of access points is to be limited to two on the eastern edge of Lowlands Farm from the existing Bedelands nature reserve and two from the Freeks Lane western edge. There will be two paths running east-west between these access points.

The surface of the paths will be varied: some will remain as dirt paths but the majority will be upgraded with no-dig loose gravel. Timber planks will be laid in muddy and wet areas as necessary, to preserve access all year round and guard against trail widening. Routes are to be narrow and will be installed sensitively, leaving existing



Left: Visualisations of the new homes Bellway will build.
Above and right: Existing woodland and paths at the nature reserve
Below right: Location of Bellway plots, including both housing and the extension to the Bedelands Nature Reserve to the east of Freeks Lane



vegetation in situ. Rubbish bins and dog waste bins will be provided at access points.

The landscape strategy for this site will enhance and maintain the existing footpath network and improve connectivity and accessibility for everyone in a controlled manner, retaining the integrity and character of the area.

You can view the planning proposals at <https://pa.midsussex.gov.uk/online-applications/> The application reference number is DM/21/3870

Bellway's Freephone Community Information number is 0800 294 1304 and they can respond to enquiries on the proposals. View the submitted layout and artist impressions of the scheme on the project website www.bellwaynorthernarc.co.uk.



Contractor update: Jackson



Jackson Civil Engineering is building the Western Link road, connecting the A2300 in the north to Jane Murray Way in the south, with new roundabouts built at the intersections with the existing highway.

Since the previous update, Jackson surfaced the road around the southern part of the roundabout. The Northern side of the roundabout was tarmac surfaced next and traffic on the A2300 was switched to this side during November. Further works will be carried out to complete the centre of the roundabout and islands. The final surfacing course will be laid soon, when weather conditions are suitable to carry the works out.

Street lighting and signage have now been installed and landscaping to the centre of the roundabout has been completed. Earthworks have been carried out for verges. Jackson have also

been constructing kerbing to the east island of the new roundabout and to the Northern roundabout.

Further ecological works have been carried out to provide newt fencing at the site of the link road. Site preparation works will continue over the winter months at West End Farm and next to Jane Murray way to facilitate the construction of the link road main carriageway and Jane Murray way roundabout. Jackson will provide replacement trees and will plant more trees than they have removed. The new trees have been carefully selected to deliver the highest possible environmental value and to increase the resilience and diversity of the local tree population – and they'll be planted at the start of the growing season next year.

For more information about Jackson Civil Engineering, visit www.jackson-civils.co.uk/

The roundabout that will join the A2300 to the Western Link Road, looking West



Contractor update: John Sisk & Son



Sisk staff members volunteered for the Mid Sussex Community Garden in Cuckfield, providing their professional services to create a safe access track and space for outdoor seating.

John Sisk & Son will build the Eastern Bridge and Link Road which will join Freeks Lane to Isaacs Lane.

Since the previous update, Sisk have completed their site set up and constructed a site access road and entrance. The compound has been tarmacked and white-lined. A temporary haul road and pedestrian footpath has been built and drainage works have begun. They continued to analyse the composition and structure of the soil and confirm locations of utility services like gas and water pipes.

Sisk have recently registered the site with the Considerate Constructors Scheme, which is a not-for-profit, independent organisation founded to raise standards in the construction industry. Construction sites, companies and suppliers voluntarily register with the Scheme and agree to abide by the Code of Considerate Practice, designed to encourage best practice beyond statutory requirements.

In October 2021, they took part in a volunteering day for the Mid Sussex Community Gardens in Cuckfield. Their engineers assessed and surveyed the ground conditions, calculated the materials required and prepared the necessary permits. Then the Sisk volunteers constructed the access track and hardstanding. A MSCG volunteer said “We couldn’t have done this job without Sisk’s fabulous support and generosity”.

Sisk are currently completing the installation of drainage works and will soon be diverting the existing services. They have also recently started earthworks in preparation for the construction of the new bridge.

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

ARTICLE 1

Modern methods of construction

How are Homes England's developer partners at the Northern Arc prioritising sustainability as they build new homes?

Sustainability is playing an increasingly important role in all of our lives. Whether that's through the use of smart energy metres, the transport we use every day, or the goods we buy from the supermarket, taking the 'green' approach isn't just of benefit to the world around us – it boosts our physical and mental wellbeing on an individual level too.

Like many other sectors, the construction industry is increasingly making sustainable, efficient choices. Homes England are making sure

that developer partners across all its projects are future-focussed in their design and build techniques and the Northern Arc is no exception.

Countryside Properties, the first house builder to join the Northern Arc, are employing a range of modern methods of construction (MMC) techniques. This will not just minimise the developer's carbon footprint on site but also means the homes they build will be more energy efficient. The people who live in those homes for generations to come will be able to do so in an



Countryside properties are using sustainable methods of construction at the Northern Arc

energy efficient, sustainable and cost-effective manner.

So, just what is sustainable construction? Picture a house being built. You might imagine bricks, cement, cranes and hard hats – and you'd be right to think of those things. But as the construction industry moves to ensure its work is as green as possible, modern methods of construction are coming to the fore. The term can refer to any number of things. Modular buildings constructed in a factory, pre-cast concrete foundations and the use of timber frames all fall under the term modern methods of construction.

Each of them allows for high-quality, energy-efficient housing to be delivered at speed – a crucial factor when you consider the need for increased housing provision across the UK. In

2017, the Government set the housebuilding industry a target of building 300,000 homes per year by the mid-2020s. In order for that target to be reached, spokespeople from within government and the housebuilding industry all agree that modern methods of construction will play a critical role.

Ready-made foundations, walls, roofs and even entire rooms can be constructed entirely in a factory, before being transported to their end destination for assembly and installation. This process can be completed in a matter of hours. The use of MMC techniques allows for housebuilding to take place at speed with no compromise on quality, meaning it will play a vital role in the construction of houses across the country in future years.

Countryside Properties are making great progress at the Oakhurst/Freeks Farm site at the Northern Arc, with the first residents due to move into their homes in spring 2022. Countryside’s work has been aided by their use of timber in structural frames for homes. These timber frames, which are initially constructed off site and then transported to the Northern Arc, are used to support internal and external walls in each of the homes they build.

The use of timber frames also provides Countryside with a great deal of flexibility for both the size, layout and final appearance of each property. Once on site, the timber frames, which are made using renewable materials, are clad in brickwork for the external structure, or other materials for internal structures.

Countryside Properties are using timber frames constructed by specialists at Stewart Milne Timber Systems. Antony Iren, Senior Development Manager at Countryside Properties, recently visited their factory in Witney.

“I’ve seen timber frames on site at the Northern Arc, but to visit the factory really brings home what an innovative tool this is.

For a business such as Countryside, making the most of these new construction techniques brings lots of benefits. We’re using renewable materials and they give us flexibility in the building process, enabling us to build quickly on site without having to compromise on quality at all. I’ve no doubt that these sorts of innovations will benefit both housebuilders and the people who will live in the homes we build.”

Simon Horn, the Technical Manager for Stewart Milne, spoke about carbon savings and the long term sustainability benefits of pre-made timber construction methods:

“Life cycle studies of timber frame homes show that they significantly outperform alternatives - timber saves about 40% of carbon emissions in comparison to concrete and about 30% compared

to steel. According to the Committee on Climate Change, using wood in construction instead of high-carbon materials such as cement and steel is one of the most effective ways to use limited biomass resources to mitigate climate change.

Countryside Properties and other Homes England developer partners will continue to use industry-leading Modern Methods of Construction at the Northern Arc to ensure we’re building sustainable homes for a sustainable community.

Below: a pre-made timber roof is lifted into place, and a shot inside the Stewart Milne factory.

Facing page top: One of the Countryside Properties apartment blocks at the Oakhurst/Freek Farm site at the Northern Arc

Facing page bottom: Homes England staff visit the Stewart Milne Timber Systems factory in 2019



ARTICLE 1

Employment and local economy

The Northern Arc is a long-term investment in and for the community.

The Northern Arc is attracting investment to the area throughout the build process and beyond, helping to promote local employment and boost local businesses.

From the very beginning, Homes England have been working closely with Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) to further the aims of the Burgess Hill Strategic Growth Programme. The Northern Arc is one of several housing developments in the area that will provide homes, jobs and essential infrastructure for residents.

As well as meeting local housing needs, the other aims of the Growth Programme being brought forward by MSDC include better public transport and active travel links and the provision of employment land to attract business investment and jobs to the local area.

Over the coming months, Homes England is looking to bring on board a developer for some of this identified employment land: a 4ha parcel to the south of the A2300. This land is suitable for a range of employment uses such as offices, research and development and industry. The developer will be required to deliver pedestrian and cycle access in line with the Northern Arc's active travel network, alongside vehicular access and car parking. The creation of employment land in this location will maximise opportunities associated with the directly adjacent employment site where DPD, Jewson and other businesses are already located.

Although the principle of supporting local economies is a key Homes England policy, there's also a legal safeguard at the Northern Arc which



Apprenticeships and new jobs will be created at the Northern Arc

ensures this work will take place. As part of the Section 106 agreements which form part of the outline planning consent for the Northern Arc, Homes England is required to implement measures to promote employment and skill development for local people.

We're aiming to ensure that jobs are created during the construction process and that the development leaves a permanent positive legacy in the area through training and skills programmes provided by our developer partners and contractors.

We'll be creating up to ten apprenticeships each year throughout Phase 1 of the build, and we'll also be inviting secondary school students for work placement opportunities. We'll make sure that we're advertising all our new jobs to local people

and where possible inviting local businesses and suppliers to tender for work.

Homes England are committed to building a sustainable community at the Northern Arc, providing opportunities for new and existing residents to benefit throughout the construction period and for generations to come.

If you are a business owner who would like to discuss opportunities at the Northern Arc employment hub site, please contact us at northernarc@homesengland.gov.uk

To find out more about the Burgess Hill Strategic Growth Programme, visit: burgesshill.net/about



Northern Arc updates

We will continue to use our project webpage and Facebook page to share information and we're keen to hear from you on how you'd like to be kept informed. Please use the contact details on this page to let us have your thoughts.

Get involved

The next developer to be appointed at the Northern Arc will be for Phase 1C which includes housing and the eastern neighbourhood park. Following this, Plot 1D includes new homes and the western neighbourhood centre. We expect this appointment to take place in early summer 2022 with a reserved matters application submitted towards the end of that year.

We're also inviting business owners interested in new employment land off the A2300 to get in touch.

Our developers will advertise how people can get involved in their pre-application consultation once they are onboard and we will share the information in this newsletter and online.

Stay updated

Visit our Facebook page for all the latest news:

@NorthernArcBH

Accessibility

We want to be accessible to all. If you would like to receive this newsletter in a different format, please contact us using the details below.

Contact details

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