

March 2015



Green light for £5 million redevelopment of village housing

Building work is due to start shortly on the first phase of the non-traditional housing redevelopment project.

We've been given the go-ahead to build 39 homes in Coalpit Heath to replace 18 properties and a rank of garages. The homes in Newlands Avenue and Oldlands Avenue are the first of up to 850 homes we plan to build in the next eight years.



Project Manager Sally Gilbert said: "We're thrilled to have been given the go-ahead to start building these much-needed new homes. These stunning new homes will provide brand-new affordable housing in the village. We've already demolished most of the existing properties so we're hoping to get the building work started as soon as possible, so that the residents can move into their new homes next spring.

"We're also pleased to announce that we've appointed affordable housing specialists Lovell to build the first homes in the programme. They have a great track record of working with housing associations delivering projects like this and we were really impressed with their commitment to customer service as well as the quality of the homes that they build.

"This is just the start of a huge programme of redevelopment, which is the biggest project we've ever undertaken. We're also due to receive permission to redevelop 18 properties in Iron Acton as well and will be starting work on this site next year."

Part of the funding for this part of the project is from the Homes and Communities Agency, which awarded us £2.4m under its Affordable Homes Programme.

We also recently submitted applications to redevelop two final sites in Coalpit Heath in Newlands Avenue and the block of garages in Coalville Road. In total we're planning to build 84 new homes in the village in the next two years.

New project surveyor joins team

With the appointment of a new project surveyor last year, the project team is now looking forward to its busiest year yet.

And as project surveyor Dave Llewellyn is going to be at the centre of the work to build the new properties. Dave, who has joined the team having previously worked for Merlin's Asset Management team, is a qualified Clerk of Works and his role will be to oversee the building contractor from start to finish. This includes ensuring the finished homes meet our standards in

everything from the materials used to the way the work is carried out.

Dave, who is a Merlin tenant himself, has been busy straight away, overseeing the continuation of the demolitions of properties in Coalpit Heath, liaising with Lovell over the start of the construction work and working with the ecologist to preserve a colony of slow worms on one of the sites.



Memory House to show village's changing face

One of our Coalpit Heath homes is going back in time to the 1970s for a special village project.

We're turning one of the homes that are due to be redeveloped into a mini-museum full of images and stories of villagers and people who used to live in the properties.

We've teamed up with Bristol-based Involving Residents in Solutions to put together the Memory House after they previously ran a similar project for Bristol City Council in Horfield.

We'll be opening the Memory House up to the public in the July when you can also find out more about how the project is going. More details will be available closer to the time.