



Respecting the past, shaping the future

Press release from
Suffolk Preservation Society
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Telling the tale of the “Field of Dreams”

The journey towards creating an award-winning affordable housing scheme has been showcased on the small screen in a bid to inspire others to push the boundaries and drive forward similar landmark developments in the future.

Supported by EEDA and Inspire East, the DVD tells the tale of Suffolk Preservation Society’s bid to put the small village of Elmswell firmly on the map by building the first ever truly sustainable affordable housing scheme with a zero carbon footprint.

Called “Field of Dreams”, it features interviews with residents, housing associations, parish council members and building experts and recounts the journey from the competition held to find architects to design the buildings to the first tenants moving in.

The release of the DVD comes shortly after the 26-home scheme, called Three Gardens, won the award for best community building in Suffolk County Council’s “Greenest County” awards. That plaudit comes on top of a Royal Institute of British Architects homes design award, received last year.

“We always felt that this development would set a national benchmark by showing that high quality, low cost, truly sustainable and well designed affordable housing can be achieved,” said Richard Ward, society director.

“We hope that through this DVD, others will follow our lead and bring forward imaginative, sustainable and carbon neutral schemes with a high quality, innovative design.

“Just because housing is affordable doesn’t mean it shouldn’t show flair and excitement throughout the development process. We hope this DVD will show others that the possibilities for such schemes are endless.”

The Three Gardens scheme was brought forward by SPS alongside Orwell Housing Association. Homes on the site have been built using energy-saving natural resources, making the development the first in the country to leave a near zero impact in terms of its carbon footprint.

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A hemp and lime spray mixture has been used to insulate the properties. Both materials breathe naturally, ensuring moisture generated inside migrates rapidly to the outside, therefore eliminating condensation and allowing buildings to keep warm while reducing the need for artificial heating.

The homes are also served by a network of underground tanks to collect rainwater, to be used for flushing toilets and watering gardens.

“We cannot go on building like we have in the past,” said housing expert Dickon Robinson, from Building Futures, who is interviewed during the film. “We are about to enter a period where the imperative of climate change is finally brought home to everybody. We need to change the way we build. Successful, small, innovative schemes (like Three Gardens) ultimately make all the difference.”

The “Field of Dreams” DVD is available from the Suffolk Preservation Society for £10. Anyone who would like a copy should ring 01787 247179.

Ends

Note to editors:

SPS, founded in 1929, originally worked to protect the county’s buildings and landscape. Today, the society has broadened its focus to help shape Suffolk’s future, largely campaigning for sensitive and appropriate development, more and better quality affordable homes and to ensure sustainable infrastructures are in place to support the county’s communities.

For more information please contact:

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