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NEWS RELEASE

NEW EXTRA CARE SCHEME COMING TO GOLDTHORPE

A sod cutting ceremony to mark the start of building works of a new Extra Care Scheme in Goldthorpe, Nr Barnsley took place on Monday 3rd August 2009.

Cherry Tree Court, which is the 2nd extra care scheme for Chevin in the Barnsley area will be a 3 storey extra care scheme comprising 60 apartments, 59 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 1 bedroom, all for affordable rent. Synergy Housing Solutions Ltd (on behalf of Chevin Housing Association Ltd) will be project managing the scheme with Southdale Homes undertaking the building/construction work.

Once completed the apartments will be allocated to people aged over 55 with care and support needs who will be nominated by Berneslai Homes.

Extra Care housing schemes link accommodation with care and are seen as the way forward to provide older people with their own high quality accommodation, with access to housing related support and a personal care package that is close at hand.

In addition to the 60 apartments which are specifically designed to be suitable for older people and wheelchair users, the scheme will contain a range of communal facilities including a lounge with coffee bar, smaller 'snug' type seating areas, fully equipped catering kitchen and restaurant, multi function/activities room, laundry, hairdressing salon, assisted bathing suite, guest suite, plus office accommodation with facilities for the care and support staff. Facilities and services will also be offered out to the wider community.

Steve Jagger, Assistant Director of Strategic Housing from Barnsley Council said "Today we are seeing the first sod cut, in a year's time we will be cutting the first piece of cake as we welcome new residents. Sixty years ago the old urban district council were building bedsits, today we see the first steps in the Dearne towards their replacement with an exciting, modern-day scheme, with fantastic facilities. I am sure this scheme will stand the test of time much better and be of great benefit to local people in the not too distant future.

"The scheme will be a credit to all concerned with its design and delivery and Barnsley Council welcomes the start of work to the third such scheme in Barnsley."

Denis Creaghan, Deputy Chief Executive of Chevin Housing Group stated “Chevin is pleased and proud to be providing 21st century homes and facilities for the people of Barnsley. Cherry Tree Court is the latest in a long line of housing developments which have come from our partnership working with the Council and local residents and which are addressing housing and regeneration issues across the Borough. This type of scheme will provide a focus for the whole community as well as a safe and secure environment for the people who live there.”

Helen Jagger, Chief Executive of Berneslai Homes said “Berneslai Homes are very pleased to be working with the Council and Chevin Housing Association in the development of another extra care scheme within Barnsley providing much needed quality affordable housing for older people who wish to have both support and independence in their home.”

Paul Moore, Managing Director of Southdale Homes commented “We are highly delighted to be on board with this particularly exciting scheme alongside our valued partner Chevin Housing Group. This quality project will provide a whole new dimension for its residents and the wider community - a credit to all involved.”

Photographed: On site where the new extra scheme is being built, from left to right - Steve Jagger - Assistant Director, Strategic Housing, Barnsley Council; Councillor May Noble; Deputy Mayoress of Barnsley - Mrs Beryl Sanderson; Deputy Mayor of Barnsley - Councillor Kenneth Sanderson; Councillor Sharron Brook; Helen Jagger - Chief Executive, Berneslai Homes; Denis Creaghan - Deputy Chief Executive, Chevin Housing Group

-Ends-

Notes for editors

Scheme background information

The scheme is being built on the site of a former sheltered housing scheme owned by Barnsley MBC which consisted mainly of bedsits and suffered from very low demand. The building was demolished in accordance with the ‘fit for purpose’ Barnsley Housing Strategy 2003-2008. The project was identified as a priority within this strategy, and also the Barnsley Supporting People Strategy 2005 and the current South Yorkshire Regional Investment Plan.

Chevin Housing Group

The Chevin Housing Group was formed in 2001 following the merger of a number of associations who had been in operation from as far back as 1974. The current group consists of Chevin Housing Association Ltd, Harewood Housing Society Ltd and Synergy Housing Solutions Ltd.

The vision for the Chevin Group is, ‘building a better future for people and communities’. In order to achieve this we are involved in a diverse range of activities. These include; managing and maintaining rented and leasehold homes, the development of new and refurbished homes (including rented, leasehold and sale options) and regeneration services, working in partnership with local people to enable them to play a part in the future of their neighbourhoods.

The Group operates across Yorkshire and the Humber and North Nottinghamshire, with around 6,500 rented homes in management. We also manage a further 1650 leasehold homes which include 750 private sector flats.

The Group's reinvestment programme is around £6m per annum and the Development Programme is producing around 250 new homes each year. In 2004 the Group formed the Synergy partnership which is a regional based development partnership of associations with Chevin Housing Group as the lead partner for delivery. Synergy Housing Solutions Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Chevin provides a development service to the Synergy partners.

An inspection carried out by the Audit Commission in 2006 determined that Chevin provides a good 2 star service with promising prospects for improvement. The report commented that, 'Chevin is a customer focussed organisation, which develops services based on customer feedback'.

The Group employs around 200 staff headed by the Group Chief Executive, Steve Close.