



NEWS RELEASE – 18 February 2013

Former derelict site in Swindon nominated for building award

A piece of land in the centre of Stratton St Margaret that was regularly used as a dumping ground has been nominated for a building award following its transformation into affordable housing for local Swindon people.

Cottsway Court, a new development of 26 flats, is the result of a partnership between Hills Homes, Cottsway Housing Association and Swindon Borough Council. The development, which stands on the site of the former home of the Police House and Station, is now in the running for a Local Authority Building Control (LABC) award.

The LABC Building Excellence Awards are all about the essence of good buildings where finalists are not judged on architectural beauty, but rather on the excellence shown from a construction and technical building control point of view. The Awards showcase buildings and design teams that have had to overcome technical issues and difficult sites with innovative and creative solutions.

Nick King, group director Hills Homes, said: "Environmental issues were a vital part of the strategy for the build process at Cottsway Court and we ensured that as many materials, products and trades as possible were sourced locally to minimise the carbon footprint and to support local enterprises.

"A major part of the building was its timber frame. The wood came from sustainable sources and by using this method of construction, a high level of acoustic and energy efficiency was achieved. The beautiful mellow render and detailing, so much a feature of Cottsway Court, was carried out by local trades people. Local suppliers were sourced for a large amount of the materials with a number of the sub-contractors coming from Stratton."

Adrian Miller, Cottsway's Head of Development, said: "These 26 new homes have been built to a high level of sustainability and comply with both the Code for Sustainable Homes and Secure by Design standards. The development was a construction challenge not least due to it being a relatively confined site in a busy location. We feel that Hills have done an excellent job.

"It is our first development working in partnership with Swindon Borough Council to provide much needed accommodation for single people, couples and young families in a major employment area of Swindon."

Cottsway Court will be judged alongside a number of other housing developments with the winner announced at an awards ceremony to be held at the Bristol Marriott Royal Hotel June this year. Regional winners go through to the LABC National finals to be held later in the year in London.

Hills Homes is no stranger to these awards having won the National LABC Building Excellence Award 2010 for 'Best Small Housing Development' for The Old Dairy, Upper Castle Combe and the West of England Regional LABC Building Excellence Award 2012 for 'Best Social or Affordable Housing Development' for Stonesfield Close, Southrop. **ENDS**



Before



After

Notes for editors:

- Preparatory works at the site included extending a natural stone wall to complement the adjoining properties and retaining existing mature trees to improve the visual appeal of the site's semi industrial location.
- Communal garden areas were seeded with a wildflower and meadow grass mix to encourage wildlife and boxes for birds and bats were incorporated into the scheme along with water butts and composting bins.
- Particular attention was paid to the surface water drainage and the SUDS technique was used throughout the site to return rain water to the ground to replenish ground water stocks. A mix of permeable paving and local Cotswold gravel was used for the parking areas and path surfaces.
- The Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 was achieved for the entire development with new technology gas boilers providing heating and domestic hot water. Designed by Ideal Heating the boilers deliver a cost effective, energy efficient system providing dual zoned areas for comfort.
- Throughout the build process, local residents were invited to visit the development to view progress. A keen proponent of the Considerate Constructor Scheme, the Hills site manager, Allan Ramsay, was on hand to show neighbours around and to answer any questions.

Media contact:

Monique Hayes, group communications officer, The Hills Group Limited

Tel: 01672 518941 monique.hayes@hills-group.co.uk



@HillsHomes



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