

STATEMENT FROM BENENDEN PARISH COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF THE PROPOSED IDEN GREEN AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Benenden Parish Council notes the concern of a number of local residents about the proposed development of affordable homes in Iden Green. The Parish Council also notes that the project has local support.

The Parish Council has a clear conflict of interest over this proposed development as it is the sole Trustee of the Harmsworth Memorial Trust who own the land. For this reason the Parish Council remained neutral over the planning application. Now that planning permission has been granted the Parish Council has no further role to play in the planning process. We understand from the English Rural Housing Association that now planning permission has been obtained they are keen for the development to commence.

The Trustee of the Harmsworth Memorial Trust does have some questions regarding the site selection process and is liaising with both Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the English Rural Housing Association in this respect. Whilst the Harmsworth Memorial Trust has been advised that the site selection process has been carried out correctly it is essential that this is clarified as a point of fact and equally important to ensure that the views of residents especially from those who are likely to be most affected are listened to, therefore pending clarification on the site selection process the matter has been placed on hold.

The Parish Council is certain however that affordable housing is needed within the village.

Karen Bell
Clerk to Benenden Parish Council and Harmsworth Memorial Trust
11 April 2013