

Mountain Wood, Bathford, Bath

Client: Somer Community Housing Trust
Architect: BBA Architects
Structural engineers: Craddy Pitcher Davidson
Contractor: Halsall Construction



Building Summary

Three homes were built on the site of some aged underused garages with the support of the Parish Council and Local Authority. Funding was provided by the Local Authority and the Housing Corporation.

The Parish Council were keen to see the provision of homes for rent for the local community in an increasingly expensive area. Planning consent was achieved in 2004 for two 3-bedroom houses and one 2-bedroom house. Work began on the scheme in November 2007 and finished in June 2008. All the homes were allocated to local people on B&NES Homeseach register.



Photos: Somer Housing Group

Climate Change Adaptation measures

The homes have:

- Improved floor, wall and roof insulation to reduce heat loss
- Solar hot water system with a 'top up' super efficient gas boiler if required (best rating for low greenhouse gas emissions). The solar panels heat the water for use in the home, saving energy
- Warm air extracted from bathrooms & kitchen, filtered and used to warm the house
- Compost bin and water butt system provided, saving energy in removing waste and delivering water to the home

It is expected that 85% of the required heating of the hot water will come from the solar panels

The homes will produce 25% less carbon dioxide than most homes previously built and there will be cheaper fuel bills. All homes built with grant funding after 2008 will now have to meet this standard. It is part of the Government's target towards the goal of all homes built after 2016 designed that they will not increase carbon dioxide levels.

Benefits of Adapting

The features included in these homes should see a drop in energy use for heating and hot water of around 25% compared to a home built to minimum Building Regulation standards. This should represent an equivalent drop in heating bills.

The homes are anticipated to reach a Code for Sustainable Homes rating of '3' which encompasses a wide range of items to reach this score. Including the lower carbon dioxide production and energy usage mentioned above, benefits include:

- Reduction in water use
- Steps to encourage re-cycling of waste in the homes
- Pollution reduction
- More efficient and environmental site management
- Enhancing the ecological value of the homes

The compulsory elements to reach Code level 3 include:

- Household water use is designed to be 105 litres or less per person per day. (The current average for un-metered households is around 150 litres per person and 135 litres per person for metered households. - OFWAT)
- At least 3 of the parts of the home, roof, walls, floors and windows are built using components which have a grading of A-D from the 'Green Guide'. This ensures sustainable sourcing of materials
- Water surface runoff is no worse than before (to help prevent water wastage and flooding)
- Homes in low flood risk area or any risk is mitigated
- Space for household waste storage and recycling containers
- Site waste management plan is produced, including procedures to minimise waste and sort, reuse and recycle

Overcoming barriers to implementation

There were additional costs involved in achieving the Code 3 requirements and implementing changes to a planning approval which was given before the Code for Sustainable Homes was introduced. However, practical hurdles were overcome and specialist advice was sought to advise the contractor from a Code for Sustainable Homes consultant. Much useful knowledge was gained by going through this process.

The contractor advised Somer that, for future schemes, the process would be easier if it were possible for the architect, contractor and Code consultant to work together prior to planning application.

Contact:

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Relevant links:

[Somer Community Housing Trust](#)
[Halsall Construction](#)