

## **Report to the Annual General Meeting of the Leiston Community Land Trust**

### **Update on Progress since 1 April 2020 and current vision for 2021**

Despite the pandemic the CLT has been busy during the year with excellent progress having been made on phase 1 of the town centre regeneration programme. This involves the creation of a new public green space or 'pocket park' in the garden of the United church between the high street and the co-op car park. It will be called Church Square and will eventually link up with the Old Post office Square and the new Market Square off Sizewell Road to complete the urban design vision the trust has put forward for our town.

Three landscape designers submitted schemes and three landscaping firms tendered for the work. With the support of the Town Council we obtained planning permission for the project and, subject to raising grant funding, we hope to appoint Roger Gladwell Landscapes to complete the work beginning in Spring 2021. Images of the completed project can be viewed on the CLT web site.

This project has involved close collaboration with the Co-op and the United church. We are hopeful that both will be able to contribute to the cost where the work has a direct benefit to their own interests.

We have been fortunate to have had help on a pro bono basis for legal advice, engineering expertise and quantity surveying services in guiding us to best value for money and we have prioritised links with local businesses to ensure that any benefits stay close to home.

Leiston Town Council applied for planning permission for Church Square and this was granted in October. We are now working hard to raise funds with the aim of starting the work in the Spring of next year.

In a wider context our partnership with East Suffolk Council continues to be fruitful. Their appointment of a part time project manager demonstrates their confidence in us and has enabled us to begin putting our Business Plan together. Importantly, this will strengthen our case for external funding and grant assistance.

We have established good working relationships with EDF's development team for Sizewell C who see our vision aligning closely with their own plans for supporting the town through the impact of the C site construction and commissioning phase.

Similarly we are working closely with County Highways chiefs to look at ways our urban design vision can merge with their own traffic management and road safety programme for the town especially in the aftermath of Covid-19. One of our trustees, councillor Levermore, is playing a key role in developing a cycling and sustainable transport policy for the town and surrounding area.

A grant from Bright Ideas has enabled us to put together an exciting web site that will play a key role in keeping members and the community at large informed of developments as we go forward.

Looking ahead to phase two we will continue to develop a strategic vision for the land owned by East Suffolk Council with the goal of providing an exemplar development comprising key civic and community facilities as well as much needed affordable homes for Leiston residents in the heart of our town.

Simon Merrett  
Trustee, Leiston Community Land Trust  
December 2020

