



# Mill Rise Village

How a great idea turned into a real inspiration...





# Foreword

Since we reached contract agreement on this project in November 2007, a lot of people have asked “How did you pull together the Mill Rise development, given the number of different organisations involved?”

So we thought it would be useful to tell the story of the Mill Rise development through the eyes of some of the key partners; I hope you will find the brochure interesting and informative. For those of you who want to do a similar development, I hope it gives you some insight into the energy and commitment involved – in the end it is all about the people and their desire to create a state-of-the art facility from which community services are provided. That’s an important point for us to remember; the new building is only there to facilitate better services for people. The Mill Rise development will ensure that local people have access to a wider range of primary care services than ever before, in a purpose-built centre. The extra-care scheme is going to provide a safe and secure place for older people to live in the area; not only will everyone have their own front door and thoughtfully designed apartment, they will have access to a wide range of facilities right on their own doorstep.

The building has been shaped by a number of people and organisations that have advised on the design; thanks to the local GPs and primary care staff who helped us understand what they wanted to achieve; special mention needs to go to Staffordshire County Council who will be commissioning the care and support services for older people within the building and to Aspire Housing for bringing extra care to Newcastle-under-Lyme for the first time.

Our partners also include the communities of Knutton, Cross Heath and Milehouse who, working with the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder, have expressed their views about this development and the regeneration of the whole area. Thanks therefore to all the members of the public who have been involved in the project and who generously shared their ideas with us.

I would like to thank all the partners involved in this project for making it happen. In particular, Sinéad Butters and Simon Priestley deserve a special mention for their leap of faith at the beginning of the project and for their ongoing drive and energy – I told you we could do it!

Finally I would like to thank the team at Prime for providing all the expertise and skills required to deliver a project of this size and complexity.

The development is due for completion in May 2009 and you can follow its progress at [www.millrisevillage.co.uk](http://www.millrisevillage.co.uk)

Ann Pursey – CEO of Prima 200 Ltd.



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# About Knutton & Cross Heath

The Knutton and Cross Heath wards are located in the east of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough. In common with other communities in North Staffordshire, they've been hit hard by economic decline caused by the loss of traditional industries which, in turn, has led to high levels of social deprivation.

RENEW North Staffordshire is one of nine Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders funded by the government. It plans to invest £2.3 billion over twenty years across North Staffordshire and has secured £36.6 million for the Knutton and Cross Heath Area of Major Intervention (AMI) over 2006-2008. Community engagement is central to the programme and extensive

consultation with local people and their representatives ensures they can continue to influence and shape the developments.

To tackle this, the neighbourhood was identified as an AMI. AMI status enables long-term investment to be targeted on aspects such as improving the local environment, upgrading existing housing stock, building a wider range of new affordable homes, creating better facilities, and other measures aimed at supporting sustainable communities. Mill Rise Village is the first new build project to take place within the Knutton and Cross Heath AMI and will be a gateway to a new mixed tenure housing development.



# Introducing an Extraordinary Development

Mill Rise Village can claim to be out of the ordinary on many counts...

To begin with, it provides convincing proof of the strength and adaptability of the LIFT concept; in this case the local LIFT company, Prima 200, being commissioned by a Primary Care Trust and a Registered Social Landlord to deliver a scheme which could satisfy the ambitious objectives and timescales of both parties.

The nature of the mixed use scheme itself is unusual, twinning a modern primary care facility (incorporating three general practices), with a complex of sixty extra care apartments for the over 55's. This rare combination, among the first of its kind, adds value to the project and will provide growing benefit to the local community.

Design quality is excellent throughout – combining functional, attractive environments for health professionals and patients with homely apartments and active communal spaces for extra care residents and their guests. Its welcoming public areas, which include a restaurant, café, bar and hair salon, ensure the development is truly inclusive.

The scheme has special significance as the first new-build project in the heart of an Area of Major Intervention. It is a physical and psychological marker which signals a new beginning for the Knutton and Cross Heath communities, which will help retain and attract new families and boost employment opportunities.

Mill Rise is the result of successful joint working by no less than eight partner organisations. While there is nothing new about multi-agency collaboration, the mix of partners, the complexity of the project and its funding, and the need to meet the differing requirements of all involved makes this achievement all the more remarkable.





# A Journey Through Mill Rise...

Expert service planners and development specialists from Prime, the LIFT's private sector partner, together with designers and architects from One, Prime's associate design company, brought a wealth of successful public sector project experience to Mill Rise – and this shows in the high quality of the finished design.

Mixed use developments always present interesting challenges. One of the main considerations at Mill Rise was the need to achieve a natural integration of the two core elements: the state-of-the-art primary care centre and the extra care complex of sixty apartments. What's more, this had to be done without compromising the functional performance of the health facilities or the homely environment of the residential accommodation.

This design dilemma has been resolved very effectively. In the approach to the main entrance, for example, you walk through a small piazza which features retail facilities including a café, a pharmacy and a hair salon. This shared public space provides a warm welcome to all, whether they're healthcare professionals, patients, residents or visitors. Once inside, the different building functions are clearly defined yet fit comfortably together as part of a unified whole.

The Milehouse Primary Care Centre has been planned with the changing needs of a growing population in mind. This involved extensive consultation with healthcare professionals and Prime's experienced advisers and designers with their in-depth understanding of primary care needs were able to smooth this

process. The two storey centre has accommodation for three general practices together with the Knutton Clinic and will act as a community nursing base. There will be facilities for physiotherapy, NHS dental services, chiropody, podiatry, phlebotomy, chronic disease management, outpatient clinics, medical training, and much more. Space can also be booked for use by local community and voluntary groups.

In the extra care complex, the sixty apartments are a mix of one and two bedroom designs with forty for rent and twenty available for shared ownership. To support the philosophy of independent living each apartment has its own letterbox, door number and exterior lighting. The designers have also created 'internal street scenes' to enhance the village community feel. Residents can simply enjoy their own space or get as involved in communal activities as they wish. They have their own lounge and crafts area, a licensed bar, and a restaurant – which is also open to the public. From the first floor level, residents also have access to the gym facility in the primary care centre.

Landscaping is an integral and important element of the scheme, not only performing the conventional tasks of shielding and softening but to create a variety of delightful exterior spaces. Thoughtful details add further interest, such as the gazebo equipped with a giant chessboard which provides competitive fun for all generations. There are practical garden areas too with raised allotments and greenhouses where green-fingered residents can grow their own flowers and produce.





Sinéad Butters

# An Idea Takes Shape

## Ann Pursey and Sinéad Butters

**When Ann Pursey, Chief Executive of Prima 200, and Sinéad Butters, Chief Executive of Aspire Housing, met to compare notes on their organisations' future plans they had little idea they would end up collaborating on an innovative scheme which combined primary care services and extra care accommodation on a single site. We asked them to explain how a great plan came together...**

### What led up to the meeting?

**AP** - You always need to be aware of how other organisations' plans and services will mesh with yours. I was introduced to Sinéad at the public consultation on the master plan for the area and we arranged to meet, together with Debbie Hope of RENEW, to talk about the extra care scheme Aspire was planning and the primary care centre Prima was developing for the PCT.

**SB** - There had been a lot of previous discussion between ourselves, RENEW, the local authority and Prima 200 about the best location for the primary care centre and our extra care scheme. Eventually we had agreed on a site owned by English Partnerships in the centre of the regeneration area. So when Ann and I met up, we were both set to build separate schemes on adjacent plots.

### What triggered the idea of a joint development?

**AP** - It didn't take long before we realised our time frames for completion of both projects were very close. We would also have two buildings going up next to each other with two access roads, two car parks, two entrances and so on. So the obvious question was why don't we think about doing something together?

**SB** - We talked about the potential for combining forces and we both agreed on that day that if we couldn't make a single scheme happen it would be foolish to go ahead with two schemes side by side without making the most of the opportunity that a joint project would bring to the community.

### How did you build support for a combined scheme?

**SB** - At Aspire we'd already built a strong, evidence-based case confirming the need for extra care housing and had the full support of RENEW for this within the national regeneration programme. We had also worked very hard to keep the local communities and councillors on board with us. That meant we could concentrate our efforts on the cost and design aspects of the new scheme.

**AP** - You start by having individual conversations with key people to explain why you want to do it this way and to gather support. I was fortunate in that Simon Priestley at the PCT rapidly saw the benefits and was a tremendous advocate. Neale Clifton at the Borough Council was also a huge supporter and Debbie Hope of RENEW helped throughout – particularly with the political interface.

### Eventually you set up a project team with eight partner organisations – wasn't that just too complex and unwieldy?

**SB** - The bottom line is communication – you need to understand and address each partner's needs, share the challenges you're all facing honestly, and then back that up by delivering what you promise. It is complex but, without wishing to sound trite, we truly believed in the project and in the extra care dimension which was never originally on the agenda. Nobody saw that as a priority at the time but it was the right thing to do and when people start to share the same vision they'll come with you.

**AP** - Yes – it's all about people in the end. There was no organisational obligation to deliver a joint scheme or to work together because of a government policy or directive. This was a local development that could just as easily, probably more easily, have been done separately but all the people involved were convinced they wanted to do it and had the authority to champion it within their organisations and make it happen. That spirit got us through the complexity and a whole lot more besides.



Ann Pursey



# Designing to Deliver

## Gail Williams

**Gail Williams was, until recently, the Housing and Regeneration Specialist at Prime (UK) Developments, the private sector partner of LIFT company Prima 200, which is responsible for the primary care elements and overall design of Mill Rise. Closely involved with the project from inception to turf-cutting, she has contributed to many of its key phases, including planning and design, grant funding and financial modelling, and consultation with care professionals and the public.**

### How unusual is this scheme?

It is quite unusual to have housing and a primary care facility on one site. It's been done a few times before in London but not in the Midlands as far as I'm aware. There are other elements to the scheme as well which make it even more interesting.

### What were the most important design aspects?

We wanted to enable the two buildings to function independently while benefiting from their association. For example, both buildings are accessed via a little piazza with a café and a hairdressers which everyone can use. Inside the extra care building there's a public restaurant. Residents can also access a gym within the primary care facility. To avoid the isolation that occurs for some older people there are plenty of 'active spaces' inside and out. These include a bar, a hobby room, and even raised allotments and greenhouses for green-fingered residents.

### Did the design change much as the development progressed?

The basic template didn't change much from the day we evolved it. The main change was to the visual appearance. As a result of our interactions with Urban Vision North Staffordshire, which reports to the Planning Committee on design proposals within the regeneration zone, we adjusted the exterior to bring in a greater variety of materials and to reflect the local vernacular more closely.

### What were the main challenges of the project from your perspective?

Where to start! Certainly one of the biggest challenges was to reconcile the various requirements of the different funding organisations. For the extra care element we had to conform to the Scheme Development Standards of the Housing Corporation; for the primary care element we had to keep to our very detailed LIFT design standards; and overall we had to work to English Partnerships design standards which applied to the whole site.

### Good communication was obviously vital to ensure progress – how was this organised?

For the primary care element there were three practices involved and we had excellent regular meetings with all of them. Practice managers, doctors, Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) and nurses all attended and we'd go through the design and tweak it. Along with this we had extensive consultation with the public in conjunction with our other project partners. We did leaflet drops, set up a website, talked to local shoppers in Morrison's supermarket, held open days, put on displays, and invited people to come and tell us about their concerns and what they wanted in the new scheme. We also involved the local Planning Committee members at an early stage – walking them around the site and answering their questions.

### There must have been times when you hit problems – how did you get around them?

It's all a matter of building relationships because if you don't you're not going to get very far. I think we all worked really hard at building those relationships up just in case we ever came to a problem. We knew we could always sit down and say 'how do we take this forward without everybody digging their heels in?' We always came up with a solution and so I think the partnership working on this was fundamental to its success.

### Would you take on something like this again?

I'm actually working up a project as we speak that is based on a similar scenario. The difference is that the primary care centre and extra care housing will be complemented by category one bungalows suitable for independent older people. I think these complementary schemes have a lot to offer many communities.



# Continuing to Improve

## Simon Priestley

Simon Priestley was, until recently, Head of the LIFT Programme for NHS North Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent PCT. Having been involved with LIFT from its inception, including the selection of its private sector partner, he is proud of its track record in delivering major improvement in primary care premises and its ability to adapt readily to innovative schemes like Mill Rise...

### When the idea of combining a health centre with extra care housing was first raised – how was it received by the PCT?

Very positively. It removed the difficulty of having to locate the health centre in either Cross Heath or Knutton. Originally the primary care premises were planned for Cross Heath and so to find neutral ground between the two communities was good. We could make use of a much larger site and we gained all the benefits of having a primary care centre next to an extra care development. While these benefits won't be realised immediately, over time they'll become increasingly valuable.

### How did local residents take to the idea?

One of the main concerns we had was getting ownership from the local population. Because the project had gone on for some time – the proposed primary care centre at Cross Heath had kicked off in 2003 – one of the worries the residents and their local councillors had was that the extra care project would mean delaying the building of the primary care centre even further. We needed to reassure them about that and at the end of the day it hasn't been a problem.

### What advice would you give to others about to embark on a similar project?

The first thing to understand is it's not a soft option. It's hard work and if you want an easy life – don't do it! It's far easier to just do a relatively straightforward single project. But our experience with Mill Rise shows that if organisations are prepared to work together and see where their strategic priorities coincide, you can get synergy and much more for your money. I would also advise people to ensure they put a robust project structure in place to support the formal aspects of joint-working.

### Why is that important?

We had an advantage in that everyone involved in the project had the capacity to work together and make things happen – and wanted to make things happen. This would certainly have gone down the tube otherwise. In fact, the project wouldn't have got off the ground at all if Ann and Sinéad hadn't come up with the original idea. However, you can't depend entirely on individual dealings and relationships – that might not be possible for others and so you need that formal structure there too.

### You're obviously a keen advocate of LIFT – how has it performed in North Staffs?

It's given PCTs a practical vehicle to make primary care facilities fit for twenty-first century medicine. We've got people into premises which are substantially better and we've removed a dozen sets of premises that are no longer fit for purpose – and this will continue. Every LIFT is different and one of the strengths of Prima 200 is the flexible approach of our private sector partner. For example, they haven't tied us to a fixed set of supply companies – every project is openly tendered for finance, construction and facilities management. That helps us get best value and, if there are any issues about costs, everything is there for people to see.

### Do you see more joint schemes like Mill Rise coming through in the future?

There are another one or two situations where planned extra care facilities are near to planned primary care centres and may offer scope for some kind of integration. I think the important point is that future joint schemes might involve extra care but they could also involve a range of other community services or facilities depending on local need. Mill Rise has proved it can be done and we know our LIFT model can cope.



# Enabling Change

## Neale Clifton

**Neale Clifton is Executive Director responsible for Regeneration and Development at Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and is also a member of the North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership's Executive Committee. As Chair of the Extra Care Capital Review Group – the central forum attended by all the principal partners involved in the Mill Rise project – he has seen the development through some of its most critical phases...**



### What stage has the regeneration of Cross Heath and Knutton reached?

If you compare it with four years ago, there's been substantial investment in refurbishing and modernising properties, carrying out environmental improvements and so on. If you live in these properties you'll notice a big difference but externally, with no new build, the area is still awaiting signs of progress. A number of government initiatives have focused on the neighbourhood but until the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder came along, there wasn't the investment potential to achieve the radical transformation we wanted. Mill Rise signals the start of that transformation.

### So Mill Rise will be the first clear sign that major change is happening?

I think most public and private sector stakeholders recognise that development and regeneration are long-term gains. But when you start to engage and consult communities, you find that most people have much shorter time horizons. They want to see how this is going to affect them in six months – they're not looking four to five years ahead. So, in that sense, the cutting of the first turf at Mill Rise has been quite symbolic and will be a catalyst for the new build phase of the regeneration.

### What role does the Borough Council play in the project?

Strategic enabler is the term some people use. We sit in the middle acting almost as honest brokers sometimes, pulling all the relevant parties together and basically helping them to focus on different elements of the programme. For example, we had a group that I chaired which focused very much on the capital build side, trying to make sure that any issues, potential blockages, or process problems could be identified and worked through at the appropriate times.

### How can you avoid those problems?

It's about all parties having clarity at the outset – what the vision is, what we're trying to do, being outcome focused. Always keeping that in mind whatever else goes on and whatever happens. It's a bit like the Three Musketeers only in our case we had about ten! Everyone has different organisational pressures but it's about saying as a partner that at the end of each meeting I'm going to go away and do what's required of me and keep that

partnership circle together. Because if you lose a link in a project like this – if a key partner gets upset – frankly the whole thing crashes down about your ears.

### What has been the most difficult aspect of the project to get right?

The key challenge for me from a local authority perspective is trying to balance the strategic enabling role with some of the processes, such as determining planning applications, where we have a more regulatory role. On the one hand you need to maintain a position where you are clearly one of the partners and being as supportive as possible as the project comes together, while on the other hand you have to adopt a formal arm's length relationship at certain stages.

### What lessons have come out of Mill Rise to date?

One of the things I've learned from this is the advantage of having people on the project team with sufficient clout to make things happen. What I've often found in the past with projects of this nature is that sometimes people don't have enough authority or confidence within their own organisations to make the critical decisions that will allow them to deliver – projects can fail for this reason. The strength of the Mill Rise partnership has really been of paramount importance in turning the idea into a reality on the ground.

#### Top Tips for Perfect Partnerships

*With complex, multi-agency projects becoming the norm rather than the exception, the need to understand the essentials of effective collaboration has never been greater.*

*While every project will be different and every partnership will have its own dynamic, we've gathered together advice from members of the Mill Rise project team to provide some Top Tips for successful partnership working.*

##### HAVE A CLEAR VISION

*A common goal is the foundation of every successful partnership and will help you through the hard times. Make sure it's well defined, clearly communicated and agreed by all.*



# Local Influence

## Debbie Hope

Debbie Hope is a Programme Manager for RENEW North Staffordshire – a partnership of organisations working to regenerate communities and boost the local economy through the government’s Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder programme. She believes RENEW’s knowledge of local housing market needs and the wider ambitions for the area’s regeneration was valuable in bringing Mill Rise to fruition.

### How important is Mill Rise to the wider regeneration of Knutton and Cross Heath?

Physically it’s right in the heart of the Area of Major Intervention and it’s also the first new-build development to happen which gives it a great psychological impact. It puts down a marker for the quality we’re determined to achieve for the local community and says that we’re not just about knocking down poor quality housing – we’re genuinely building for the future. It also shows RENEW can use its local knowledge to influence the quality of developments in line with the area masterplan – even when opportunities arise at a fairly late stage.

### How did you get over that challenge?

By explaining the advantages. It was a bigger, better and more sustainable building which would offer greater long-term benefit to the community because of the co-location of the primary care centre with the extra care housing. We were able to promise Cross Heath residents that although Mill Rise was further away, planning conditions would ensure good transport links and access were provided. Because we were working so closely with our other partners we could make those promises and know they’d be delivered.

### What are the ‘must-haves’ for achieving a successful scheme when many partners are involved?

Having a common goal is essential – that seems obvious but when you drill down you can find that’s not always the case. Along with that you need political buy-in from all the partners so that when you hit the difficult times that inevitably arise you know you’ve got the collective will to solve them. Openness and flexibility are important too. With Mill Rise the personalities involved were happy to put any issues on the table and talk them through, and if urgent action was needed they were prepared to bypass their diaries and get the work done.



### Did Mill Rise fall into that category?

Yes – because there was already a new primary care centre in the pipeline with planning permission granted on a different site. The land purchase still had to be worked out but basically it was ready to go. When the opportunity to build Mill Rise came along, we had to convince the local community and their representatives that they should put aside the centre they’d campaigned so hard for and, instead, support a more ambitious scheme in a new location.



# An Extra Dimension

## Caroline Simpson

**Caroline Simpson is Business Development Director for Aspire Housing – a non-profit making Registered Social Landlord which provides and manages high quality affordable homes across North Staffordshire. While partnership working is the norm for Aspire, Mill Rise has given the company its first opportunity to collaborate with the health sector. Caroline describes the challenges and the benefits...**



### When did you first get involved in the Mill Rise project?

I came on board after Prima 200 had been selected as our development partner and worked with the team to turn it from a paper-based exercise into a deliverable scheme by getting the funding and legal arrangements for the extra care into place.

### Working with a range of partner organisations is not unusual for Aspire is it?

As a Registered Social Landlord working in the housing environment we're reliant very often on public sector funding and used to working with a lot of partners. Some of the best schemes are born of having many people involved but it does bring its challenges along the way. The real difference in this case is that we've never worked closely with a PCT on a health-related project of this kind before and so it was very exciting for us.

### What were the main challenges?

One of the biggest from my viewpoint was getting all the funding together because it was a complex package. On the PCT and Prima 200 side they obviously had their own LIFT funding to organise. On our side there was a contribution from the Housing Corporation and from RENEW, as well as from our own finances. Every funding stream comes with its own criteria but our funding partners gave us excellent support so from the outset we were very clear about their expectations and what we needed to deliver. Our colleagues at Prima 200 also had public sector experience and that helped because they understood the challenges we were facing.

### Does complexity have an impact on project timescales?

You have to be realistic about timescales. We had a very strong partnership in place and while you can always improve on communication we had a pretty good tight unit from the start. The length of time involved in seeing a scheme through from its initial stages through to the start on site always takes longer with any development project and with one as complex as this you've got to take that into account.

### How do you manage to keep the local communities engaged and involved through this process?

We've built strong links with the local community and carried out a lot of consultation and communication, not only on the new joint facility but going right back to when the masterplan for the whole area was being developed. Because Mill Rise is part of a much bigger regeneration project we were able to tap into existing community groups and networks. I think the groundwork we've done has really helped to embed the new project within the community. We've recently created a Friends of Mill Rise Group where local residents who want to keep involved can shape how it develops over time.

### What have you found most personally satisfying about the project?

My background is in large scale regeneration and I worked mainly at regional development agencies before joining Aspire. In contrast, Mill Rise has been a very hands-on project for me and it's been a great experience to work at the coalface and help see it all the way through to a successful start on site.





# The Wider View

## David Charmbury

During the development, David Charmbury was a Regeneration Manager for national regeneration agency English Partnerships with responsibility for investments and projects across North Staffordshire and Shropshire. As Project Manager for the agency's investment in RENEW North Staffordshire's Knutton & Cross Heath AMI, his responsibilities included coordinating the successful planning application for Mill Rise. <sup>1</sup>

### One of English Partnerships' core functions is to acquire and sell land to enable regeneration, what else can the agency contribute to schemes like Mill Rise?

As the national regeneration agency our overall objective is to support the creation of high quality, well designed sustainable places for people to live, work and enjoy. We want to encourage people to stay because their needs are being met and we want to attract newcomers to support communities and help them thrive. In addition to our investment input we promote best practice in urban design and construction standards.

### What are the critical factors that make one project more viable than another?

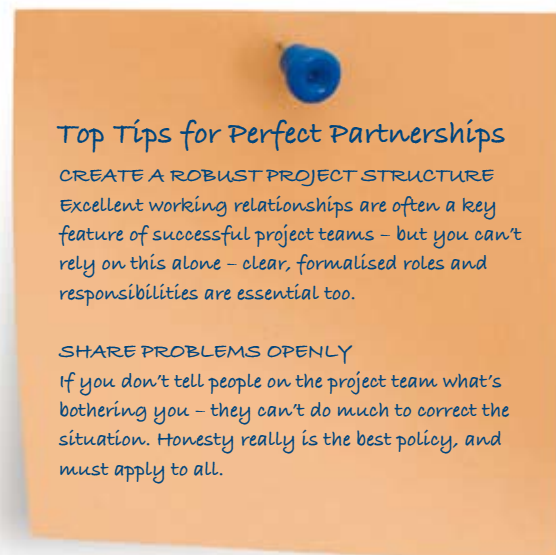
We appraise schemes against a range of criteria. Certainty of delivery is very important. So too is sustainability in that the scheme must provide lasting benefit for the whole community. We look for flexibility – for example, the ability to accommodate changing demographics over time. We also assess potential to attract private investment to boost the local economy. As a government agency, value for money is key for us, as is the contribution a scheme can make to wider government aims.

### Mill Rise is one of the first projects to get underway within the regeneration of the local area – does that give it particular significance?

It does. One of the agency's main concerns was to ensure Mill Rise supported and complemented the holistic aspirations of the regeneration. It was imperative to get the design and planning submission right because the scheme would set the tone and the standard for subsequent phases of development. We had to strike the right balance between producing something imaginative enough to help bring about transformational change while at the same time respecting the local vernacular.

### Multi-agency projects are complex by nature. How do partners ensure they keep up momentum and stay on track?

Partners have to keep in mind the common goal they all share – which is to make life better for people. With Mill Rise we were fortunate in having a very well-chaired forum where the partners could resolve any setbacks with honesty and transparency. Above all, everyone has to be totally committed. There's a quote by Emerson: "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm". That holds true for any enterprise but for regeneration projects, enthusiasm is a prerequisite.



1. David Charmbury is now Projects and Programme Manager for Transforming Telford.



# Principal Partners

## Developed by:



### Prima 200

This Local Improvement Finance Trust is a public private partnership which provides health and social care premises in the North Staffordshire area. Prime, the LIFT's private sector partner, was responsible for the design and delivery of Mill Rise for NHS North Staffordshire and Aspire Housing.

## On behalf of:



### Aspire Housing

Aspire is a non-profit making Registered Social Landlord that provides over 16,000 customers with affordable homes across North Staffordshire and South Cheshire. Playing a prominent role in local regeneration, it was responsible for commissioning the extra care and retail elements of Mill Rise.



### North Staffordshire

### NHS North Staffordshire

NHS North Staffordshire is responsible for delivering primary care services to over 200,000 people in Newcastle and Staffordshire Moorlands and is a shareholder in LIFT company Prima 200. It approved the commissioning of all the primary care sections of Mill Rise including its three GP surgeries.

## With support from:



### Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

NULBC undertakes all the usual roles of a borough council including continuing responsibility for local regeneration and development. It took a strategic enabling role in the Mill Rise project as well as carrying out its statutory planning and other formal duties.



### Staffordshire County Council

SCC is responsible for countywide services including education, social services and highways, and produces the Staffordshire strategic plan. Its contribution to Mill Rise includes work on highways and infrastructure, as well as the ongoing revenue for the housing related support and personal care services.



### RENEW North Staffordshire

One of nine government-funded Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders in England. RENEW promotes regeneration by creating a stronger, more stable housing market. Its local knowledge and groundwork with Knutton and Cross Heath communities provided vital support for Mill Rise.



### English Partnerships

Soon to join the Housing Corporation in the new Homes and Communities Agency, English Partnerships' national mission is to support high quality sustainable growth. It acquired and sold the land for the Mill Rise site, influenced the design and coordinated planning submissions.



### Housing Corporation

The Housing Corporation is the national government agency that helps to fund new affordable housing and regulates housing associations in England. It contributed over £4.5m to the extra care element of the Mill Rise scheme and took special interest in this innovative development.

# Inside Prima 200...

**Prima 200 is the trading name of the North Staffordshire LIFT Company and was commissioned by NHS North Staffordshire and Aspire Housing to deliver the Mill Rise scheme. We take a brief look at Prima’s structure and how it has developed the LIFT concept to provide a powerful vehicle for supporting change...**

As one of 46 Local Improvement Finance Trusts in England, Prima 200 was set up to inject much greater levels of investment into front-line health and social care facilities. In common with all LIFTs, Prima 200 is a public private partnership – a joint venture company which has its operations overseen by a local Strategic Partnering Board responsible for vetting and approving all projects.

## Prima 200 has three groups of shareholders:

**Community Health Partnerships** (formerly Partnerships for Health) is owned by the Department of Health and represents its strategic interests. CHP also provides guidance and enables sharing of experience and knowledge between LIFT companies. It has a twenty percent shareholding in Prima 200.

**Stoke-on-Trent Primary Care Trust and NHS North Staffordshire** are responsible for the strategic planning and commissioning of primary care facilities in their areas. Together they have a twenty percent shareholding in Prima 200. This enables a share of the income generated by the LIFT company to be returned to the public sector.

**Prime LIFT Investments Ltd** is a joint venture between Prime Plc and Barclays Private Equity and is the private sector partner. It has a sixty percent shareholding. Prime itself provides a complete supply chain to undertake all the key facets of building delivery. These include: site acquisition; integrated design through One Ltd, Prime’s associate design company; planning and approvals; legal and financial support; construction management; and ongoing facilities management.



### Top Tips for Perfect Partnerships

#### DON'T FORGET THE END GOAL

*When you get bogged down in what seem like intractable problems or frustrating bureaucracy, remind people of the agreed objective – that often unblocks the jam.*

#### UNDERSTAND OBLIGATIONS OF OTHERS

*Every partner on your project team will have their own organisational politics and priorities to deal with. Recognise these and work around them – your project will benefit.*



### Top Tips for Perfect Partnerships

#### COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

*Frankly, you just can't do enough of this – it's a continuing requirement, which is why we repeated it twice. But be sure to remember that communication is a two-way street.*

#### BE PREPARED FOR HARD WORK

*It's a fact: multi-agency projects are invariably harder and more time-consuming than single agency ones, but the outcome can make the extra work more than worthwhile.*

While the private sector partners in most LIFT companies include a shareholding construction company responsible for the building work on all schemes, Prime has pioneered a different approach, putting out each project to competitive tender, not just for construction, but for finance and facilities management too. This transparent process builds confidence and ensures excellent value for money compared to national LIFT benchmarks.

While its initial focus was on the provision of new primary healthcare premises for its PCT partners in North Staffordshire, the effectiveness of Prima 200's LIFT model is allowing it to deliver new schemes for other organisations that share similar improvement objectives. The Mill Rise scheme with its mixed use format is just such an example and heralds a new and exciting phase in the development of the LIFT programme.

# MILL RISE



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