

Press Release

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Open day event at Maison Dieu, Dover

Open day at Maison Dieu

Southern Housing Group celebrates new development Maison Dieu, with an open day event to be held on Wednesday 26 June.

To mark the occasion, a tree will be planted by Councillor Sue Nicholas, Chairman of Dover District Council, and Councillor Sue Chandler, Dover District Council Cabinet Member, who will say a few words to formally open the development.

Residents and members of the local community have all been invited to help celebrate one of Dover's newest and most welcomed additions. The site was previously occupied by a decommissioned post office depot and car repair premises. Southern Housing Group acquired the site and commissioned the design and construction to meet a high quality brief. Generous space standards were part of a strategy to achieve Lifetime Homes.

Situated in central Dover, the development consists of 40 homes around a central courtyard. There are two blocks of flats, Eleanor Court and Bertram Court, and four family houses. All homes are let at social rents. Southern Housing Group invested over half the capital cost of the scheme with assistance from the Homes and Communities Agency under the 2008/11 National Affordable Housing Programme. The design was undertaken by architects CZWG and achieved a quality which regenerates and enriches Dover's built environment. The development comprises:

- Four, four-bed houses
- 10 one bedroom flats
- 26 two bedroom flats

A local lettings plan included the designation of one block of 18 flats to people aged 55 and over. Two ground floor flats, one in each block, have a flush floor shower suitable for residents with restricted mobility; and all ground floor flats have been designed to facilitate conversion to a wet room if needed. All the family houses have a ground floor shower room and provision for a 'through floor' lift to be fitted in the future.

Dale Meredith, Southern Housing Group Development Director, said: "We are proud to develop a local scheme, where we have been able to provide high quality homes for people within the community who are in need of affordable housing.

"We have worked closely with Dover District Council to ensure that the majority of people who have been allocated homes in the flats are moving from three or four bedroomed houses. This has helped some people who were going to have their entitlement to housing benefit reduced because they were under-occupying their previous homes".

Cllr Sue Chandler, Dover District Council Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "We are very pleased to see this housing development officially open. New housing provision has a key role to play in the future of the district, and good quality affordable housing is a vital part of this. Developments such as this play a key role in the regeneration of Dover and the creation of sustainable communities."

Southern Housing Group has also helped to create local opportunities at the Maison Dieu development by working with the building contractor, Jenner (Contractors) Ltd to create six new apprenticeship posts through this and another local building contract. The development also provided work for many local people, through a number of locally based sub contractors and suppliers.

Open day details are:

Date: Wednesday 26 June

Timing: 12 noon to 2pm

Venue: Maison Dieu Road, Dover

followed by light refreshments at the Council Chamber, Maison Dieu House, Biggin Street, Dover

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- Over the last 110 years, Southern Housing Group has become one of the largest housing associations in the south of England, housing 66,000 residents, managing more than 25,500 homes, employing almost 800 people and working with more than 70 local authorities across the South East, including the Isle of Wight.
- Our mission of 'Unlocking the potential of people and places' unites the organisation behind a common set of qualities and objectives.

- Our activities focus on four key areas: the development of quality affordable housing; housing and neighbourhood management; a range of housing options for rent and home ownership; and social and economic regeneration.
- Our social and economic regeneration work is undertaken to improve the lives of residents in the communities and neighbourhoods where we build and manage homes. It provides tangible evidence of our commitment to building sustainable communities.
- Southern Housing Group is a member of the g15, which represents London's 15 largest housing associations. The g15 houses one in ten Londoners and builds a quarter of London's new homes. We are working to solve the housing crisis by delivering good quality, affordable homes of all types. To find out more about the g15's work please visit www.g15.org.uk

For further information or to arrange interviews, please contact Karen Gilbert at Southern Housing Group on 0207 7017 8521 or e-mail Karen.gilbert@shgroup.org.uk

Notes to Editors

Journalists are invited to attend the event. Photos will be available from us after the event.

Southern Housing Group is the 2010 Affordable Home Ownership Provider of the Year, an award which recognises the Home Ownership Provider who has exceeded in the task of moving the home ownership industry forward, and who has introduced outstanding schemes into the market, while considering the needs of the community and the environment.

Over the last 100 years, Southern Housing Group has become one of the largest housing associations in the south of England, housing 66,000 residents, managing more than 25,500 homes, employing almost 900 people and working with more than 70 local authorities across the South East, including the Isle of Wight.

Our mission of 'Unlocking the potential of people and places' unites the organisation behind a common set of qualities and objectives. The values underpinning our mission statement are to be Progressive, Inclusive, Responsible and Reliable.

Our activities focus on four key areas: the development of quality affordable housing, housing and neighbourhood management, a range of housing options for rent and home ownership and social and economic regeneration.

The Group's social and economic regeneration work is undertaken to improve the lives of residents in the communities and neighbourhoods where the Group builds and manages homes. It provides tangible evidence of the Group's commitment to building sustainable communities.

For media enquiries contact communications@shgroup.org.uk or call the Communications Team on 020 7017 8521. Find out more about Southern Housing Group at www.shgroup.org.uk