

SWG VISIT TO SCANDIA-HUS – 19 DECEMBER 2024

Event: Visit Scandia-Hus and Poland Meadow

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Four members of the SWG visited Scandia-Hus, looked round several of their show homes, and met one of their project managers. The purpose of the visit was to assess whether Scandi-Hus could be a potential bidder for part of all of the design and/or delivery of the housing project. The team discussed, *without commitment* on either side, how the company might be involved.

The team then looked at Poland Meadow, a site where Scandia-Hus had built 12 affordable houses, of which four were 1-bed, five 2-bed and one 3-bed, plus 5 self-build. Since all the houses were occupied and Scandia were no longer onsite, the team did not engage any of the residents. A follow-on visit to the Poland Trust itself is planned to discuss their approach to, and lessons from, their project.

Established in UK in 1974, Scandia (<https://www.scandia-hus.co.uk>) are the largest designer and supplier of Swedish energy-saving timber frame homes in the UK. Over 5000 of their homes have been built, mainly as individual self-builds to the buyer's design and specification. All Scandia houses are timber-framed and have triple glazing, unless the buyer asks for double-glazing. They have very high standard thermal insulation and heat pumps and can also have solar panels and heat recovery systems. There are typically several options for each feature, for instance the window frames can be timber, aluminium or uPVC. The external facing can be brick, render, stone or timber.

The SWG team looked at 3 show homes; all were built to an extremely high standard and fitted out at various levels with different heat and power sources. The show homes are examples, rather than from a catalogue. Anything for Chilbolton would be to the CLT's or individual purchaser's design.

The Lodge is a 3-bed bungalow covering about 1800 sq ft (170m²) with a flat roof. It has a large open living space, comprising sitting, dining and kitchen areas, and a separate snug. It has a ground source heat pump, solar panels and battery system. Full details at <https://www.scandia-hus.co.uk/designs/the-lodge/>

The Adelia is a large, 2-storey, 3-bed house with about 2800 sq ft (260 m²) floor area. It has a large L-shaped family/dining/kitchen area, a separate sitting room and a study. There are 3 large bedrooms, two with en-suite showers, and family bathroom upstairs. The house has a full heat recovery system and a ground source heat pump with two boreholes. Full details are at (<https://www.scandia-hus.co.uk/designs/adelia-show-house/>)

Field Code Changed

The Mulberry is a 3-bed chalet bungalow with about 2700 sq ft (250m²) floor area. It has a large open dining area with kitchen to one side, a separate sitting room and study. There are two large bedrooms downstairs and one, plus a large studio area, upstairs. It uses an air source heat pump. Full details are at <https://www.scandia-hus.co.uk/designs/the-mulberry/>

After viewing the show homes, the SWG team discussed, *again without commitment*, how Scandia might design and deliver the housing project. All options assumed that the CPC submitted the pre-application to TVBC.

There are a range of options, each building on the previous one:

- A. Scandia could assist in refining the detailed layout of the site, then proceed to detailed design of at least the affordable houses, and potentially the downsizers.
- B. Scandia could design and deliver the timber frame kits to site for a contractor appointed by the CLT to assemble, having also completed the ground works.
- C. Scandia could assemble the framework of the houses, and a CLT contractor could skin and/or fit them out.
- D. Scandia could deliver the houses complete, able to be connected to the utilities; however, the latter would be the responsibility of a CLT contractor to design and deliver.
- E. Scandia could design and deliver the whole site as a single turnkey solution.

Since the project is dealing with public funds, Scandia recognised that competition was essential, and that it was CPC's responsibility to define what and how that competition should be run.

Post-meeting discussion

Competition. Discussion within the SWG team indicated that several options might be available for competition (there may be more):

- Separate the project into several sub-projects, each of which would need to be defined by the Community Land Trust (CLT), then the CLT project manages the delivery of each and acts as the prime contractor. Each sub-project would be competed as a separate entity by the CLT.
- Compete each sub-project, where Scandia (or A N Other) might be appointed to design and deliver the houses, but the sub-contractors they used for, say, the ground works, external facing/cladding, fitting out and utilities would be competed.
- Compete the whole project at prime contractor level, i.e. Scandia might be one of several contenders.

Eligibility for houses. In discussing the scope of any contract, particularly the way prospective renters (of affordable) or purchasers (of downsize) might be involved in the design, the SWG team highlighted the urgent need to discuss and agree the eligibility criteria for each type of house. The rules for affordable homes were laid down by TVBC, but eligibility for downsize and self-build would likely be novel unless precedents and good practice could be found elsewhere.

Opportunities for novel heat and water solutions. Given the pressures on utilities in the village, the CLT needs to identify the potential for district ground source heat pump horizontal arrays (as opposed to multiple individual vertical boreholes) and/or grey/ ground water collection and storage. The playing field and potential car park might be options for either, perhaps both. These considerations needed to feed into the discussion about the timing of transfer of land to the CLT.

Finance. CAF Bank had funded Poland Trust will likely have a lot of background knowledge that would be useful to us.

These items would be added to the agenda for consideration at future SWG meetings.