



## STATEMENT BY THORVERTON CLT BOARD – MARCH 2026

The CLT Board feels that it needs to dispel the rumours and innuendo about its involvement with the Diocese and the 'Glebe field' development. Here are the facts, all of which can be confirmed.

### 1. CLT involvement with the Diocese land being sold

There is absolutely no truth in the suggestion that the CLT 'tipped off' or 'set hares running' in regard to the Diocese making contact with a potential developer. The explanation is quite simple; on 3<sup>rd</sup> March last year MDDC issued a Call for Sites, details of which are shown here:

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/mid-devon-call-for-sites-2025/>

The CLT was involved in the Call for Sites as part of the Church Commissioners response (NB a different body to the Diocese); the CC put forward 6 sites in Thorverton for consideration and the CLT was specifically mentioned as a partner for the two sites in Silver St.

The CLT is therefore confident that it was the Call for Sites that led to the Diocese land being considered for development; any claims to the contrary are untrue, unsupported and unhelpful.

### 2. CLT contact with the Diocese

The CLTs first contact with the Diocese was an invitation from the Diocese office in Exeter to attend a meeting to be held in the Vicarage on 12 June 2025. Andrew Foster attended that meeting; 8 others were present, including members of the Church and the PCC, along with a representative from Savills; the developer was revealed to be Summerfields. Andrew Foster outlined the plans that the CLT had for the provision of Affordable Housing in Silver St but had no other input. No mention was made of this meeting on the CLT website as the meeting was held in confidence and it was the responsibility of the Church to let the village know of the potential development.

### 3. Contact with Summerfields

At the CLT meeting on 20 June 2025 the following item was minuted – *but note that this proposal is no longer being considered as the CLT is now working with Hastoe.*

#### **6. Direct approach to developers**

*AS proposed that we contact some local developers (not RPs/HAs) to see whether they might be interested in taking on the whole development (acknowledging that somewhere in the process there would still need to be an RP/HA, not least to receive Homes England grant and to manage the completed homes). Agreed that AS would approach a select short list.*

Andrew Saunders, an architect by profession meaning he had a good knowledge of potential companies in this field, was tasked with contacting local housing developers in regard to the Silver St project. Four developers were contacted, one of which was Summerfield and Andrew Saunders and Andrew Foster held one brief meeting with Neal Jillings on 15 July 2025. It was quickly apparent that Summerfields had no interest in working with the CLT as they had other projects on the go, including the Glebe field in Thorverton. There was no follow up contact with Summerfields, or indeed any other of the four, at that time.

### 4. Latest developments



To help progress the Silver St site there are now regular 4-way meetings between the CLT, Savills (acting for the CC), Hastoe and MDDC Planning. At the most recent 4-way meeting on 4 March, the CLT confirmed that they were shelving any plans for developing the southern site in Silver St. It had become apparent that this matter was in danger of holding up the progress of the project to build affordable housing with Hastoe as the HA on the northern site. All parties agreed that this was the best way forward.

At the same meeting Hastoe confirmed that their preference was to build approx 15 homes on the northern site; these would be mostly for social rental with a few (approx 3?) for shared ownership. These homes would be for local people in housing need, secured by a Section 106 legal agreement. This total of 15 dwellings falls a little short of the HNS target of 19 homes meaning that TCLT's aim of building some 'DMS starter homes' is currently shelved. Impromptu conversations were held with Summerfields at their recent exhibition in The Exeter to let them know of this; no formal contact has been made.

## **5. Communications**

In regard to the comment that *"The problem with TCLT is that they do not engage regularly with the TPC or community and progress is very slow"* the CLT respectfully points out that it publishes an update in Focus 11 times per year. This report is also used to refresh the homepage of the website every month for those that don't read the magazine. We also publish a report on every Board Meeting on the website, along with notes on the Open Meetings, copies of the HNS, the site plans etc.

The CLT also committed to holding regular Open Meetings so that the village could hear of the latest plans and ask questions of the CLT. These meetings have been held in Feb, July and Nov 2025 with the next announced for April 2026 – roughly three per year. As to progress being 'slow', the CLT can only progress as fast as the process allows.

## **6. Conclusion**

The CLT considered the benefits of issuing this statement carefully before proceeding; saying nothing only allows rumours and hear-say to gain traction. This statement clearly sets out how the CLT has proceeded in the last twelve months, with all the actions documented. Having made their position clear the CLT doesn't intend to spend more time on this matter and will now focus on delivering Affordable Housing to the residents of Thorverton, the task with which we were entrusted.

Andrew Foster  
Andrew Saunders  
Andrew Wiles  
Board, Thorverton Community Land Trust