

Willmott Dixon named as contractor for sustainable regeneration in Solihull

2 years ago



[Willmott Dixon](#) is set to bring its track-record for building cutting-edge sustainable homes to Solihull with its appointment to deliver 25 net-zero carbon (regulated) social rented homes in Kingshurst.

This first phase forms part of a wider regeneration masterplan that will see the village centre transformed over several phases to provide both sustainable housing and modern retail space, centred around a brand-new community health and wellness hub.

Working on behalf of SMBC (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council) and SCH (Solihull Community Housing), Willmott Dixon's new appointment follows its recent role demolishing the main shopping parade and then carrying out enabling works for the new homes. Work to build the three- and four-bedroom family homes as well as one-bedroom maisonettes has started, with groundworks currently underway to reduce flood risk to the homes.

It follows similar work in other parts of the country, including building the first homes in South Wales to meet the ultra-efficient Passivhaus standard, which it did for Caerphilly County Borough Council in 2022. This was followed up by more Passivhaus standard homes in Barking for Be-First.

Dan Doyle, director at Willmott Dixon, said:

"As a business with a rich history in the region, we are so pleased to have been appointed to deliver the initial phase of this development project for Kingshurst village centre. "The regeneration will bring wide-ranging benefits for the local area and the net-zero carbon in operation homes will go a long way to increasing energy security and protecting residents from fuel poverty. "We are taking a sustainable, fabric-first approach for this development, using timber frames with a high air tightness score to keep the homes

well insulated and extremely economical. Each property will work off air source heat pumps instead of gas, have windows with a low U-value for high thermal efficiency, be fitted with integrated PV and be designed to Secured by Design standard.”

The contractor will also be delivering £1.78m in added social value. This includes the operation of a Building Lives Academy (BLA) on site with the first cohort due to start later this year. The Academy is designed to help tackle local unemployment or for those retraining to gain skills and experience in construction. Funding is being provided by West Midlands Combined Authority and it will be delivered in partnership with Solihull College.

Dan added:

“We will also be offering those in the local community looking to take their construction training to the next level the opportunity to learn and develop their skills throughout the project, and hope that we can leave a positive legacy for the community through our Building Lives Academy.”

Solihull Community Housing has assigned a community engagement officer to the scheme who will ensure the local residents, business owners and members of the community are kept informed about new developments throughout the regeneration process.

Councillor Ian Courts, leader of Solihull Council and Portfolio Holder for the Economy, said:

“This is a huge day for Kingshurst as this first phase of construction officially gets underway. “It marks an important first step in delivering on a much wider scheme that will totally transform Kingshurst, while also helping to address the current shortfall of affordable housing in Solihull and bring the long vacant former Mountfort pub site back into use. “This has been a complex scheme from the start, but one we are committed to making sure we get right. The 25 new homes being built here have been designed with the highest energy efficiency standards in mind and will serve as an exemplar for what can be achieved for the rest of the scheme and elsewhere across the borough.”

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said:

“Advancing the regeneration of Kingshurst village centre has been a key priority for me as Mayor – and of course a really important scheme for Solihull as well as the wider region. “That’s why it’s wonderful to be able to congratulate Solihull Council on their leadership of this project – ensuring suitably sensitive redevelopment of the site, prioritising high quality housing that is both sustainable and affordable, and keeping a clear focus on enabling the Kingshurst community to thrive. “Right across our region, we’re on track to build 215,000 new homes by 2031 and the regeneration of Kingshurst is helping us to deliver on this ambitious goal. I cannot wait to see this scheme come to life.”
