**Sudbury – key facts:**

1. **The people (Census 2011):**

* Over 13,000 residents in total
* Of these 2,894 people are aged over 65 (22.3%)
* 5,986 total households, of which 4,192 are under occupied (70%)
* 1,103 over 65 year old single households
* By 2013 the number of households (in Babergh) aged 40-59 is predicted to fall by 7% and households over 80 are predicted to rise by 57% on current numbers. So many, many more people in the potential frail elderly category and fewer than recent generations for larger family oriented properties.

1. **The housing stock types by bedroom numbers (Census 2011):**

* 781 – 1 bed properties
* 1,890 – 2 bed properties
* 2, 552 – 3 bed properties
* 749 – 4+ bed properties

There appears to be a lack / under supply of open market (long leasehold) age exclusive, over 55/ retirement apartments (using EAC website and Zoopla evidence) within the current housing stock of 1013 flats /apartments.

Percentage distribution of all flats / apartments by Ward is:

* Sudbury South – 64%, total number 650- Belle Vue is located here
* Sudbury East – 23%
* Sudbury North – 13%.

1. **Tenures of the housing stock (Census 2011):**

* 62% of owner occupation
* 19% socially rented
* 17% privately rented
* 1% shared ownership

Making a supposition that older households currently under-occupying properties by 2 or more bedrooms wish to find alternative, town-centre, easier to maintain homes, these would appear to be in short supply if supply is matched to potential demand, using the figures above.

1. **Affordability:** the 2014 Suffolk Housing Survey and the Census 2011 confirms that many current local owner occupiers are mortgage free, have over £25,000 savings and considerable (more than £250,000) home equity ensuring so have adequate financial capacity to consider the high spec. product offered by Churchill’s.
2. **Recent housing completions / in the pipeline:**

<http://www.bellway.co.uk/new-homes/essex/harp-meadow> Comprises 2 – 4 bedroom homes, ranging from £199,995 to £339,995 freehold, with some social affordable rented properties on site (35%) Net Residential Completions recorded in the parish of Sudbury (1st April 2010 to 31st March 2015). Total = 59

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Unspecified** | **1-bed** | **2-bed** | **3-bed** | **4-bed +** |
| **Flats** | - | **7** | **16** | - | - |
| **Bungalows** | - | - | **4** | **4** | - |
| **Houses** | - | - | **5** | **15** | **8** |
| **Unknown** | - | - | - | - | - |

There were significantly more net completions recorded in the parish of Great Cornard over the same time period. Total = 340

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Unspecified** | **1-bed** | **2-bed** | **3-bed** | **4-bed +** |
| **Flats** | **1** | **43** | **39** | - | - |
| **Bungalows** | - | - | **23** | **11** | - |
| **Houses** | - | **7** | **62** | **83** | **65** |
| **Unknown** | - | - | - | **2** | **4** |

The Access Database doesn’t record completions by Ward (Paul B).

1. **Sudbury the place:** good description in the above link from Bellway. Biggest social issue for Babergh generally, is increase in total number of households with head of household aged 80 or over. However, an increased supply of quality, all-age accessible homes close to goods and services would support an ageing population maintain good health, independence and to age positively.

Also, consider the potential positive impact of the pilot ‘Sudbury Connect’ on over 55 housing market. Too early to know the benefits of Sudbury Connect <http://sudburyhive.org/connect-sudbury/frequently-asked-questions/> but has the potential to make Sudbury a destination of choice for right-sizing householders.

1. **Belle Vue site specifics:**

* 5 mins walk from town centre, containing complete range of goods and services including health care, shops, train station, bus station, taxis, petrol station, council service access point, cultural and heritage opportunities, footpath network, sporting and exercise venues, theatre,
* Recreation site directly to the rear
* Potential for off road parking on site
* Site is already well known to local residents so may be popular choice for aspiring home movers
* Site is on a slope, which will need mitigation consideration as frailer over 55s could find any slope limits accessibility or ease of use.

1. **Churchills:**

No developments in Suffolk currently. Closest are in Chelmsford, Saffron Walden, and Clacton and all are 30 miles by road from Sudbury! (theaa.com travel planner)

<http://www.churchillretirement.co.uk/retirement-living-explained/safety-and-security/>

1. **Flats / apartments for sale in Sudbury Nov 2015**

Weavers Court, Sudbury sale price £140,000 – 2 bed flat – **over 55 retirement property** – FirstPort (formerly Peverel retirement housing) company – long leasehold. This is a standard sheltered housing product.

1. **Other evidence:** Demos think tank reports 1 in 4 over 60s would be interested in buying a retirement property. However, another reports that whilst they think about it, they don’t do it. Lack of availability is often cited. TBC
2. **HAPPI 2 design principles**

Specific retirement properties are generally characterised by HAPPI 2 design features (see below) and shared / organised maintenance of building fabric, window cleaning, gardening, upkeep of whole site. The 2014 Suffolk Housing Survey provides evidence that many older households are currently looking for properties with smaller gardens and less maintenance.

The Strategic Housing team would support an application for 2 bed, high quality, and energy efficient apartments and depending on the number being provided, shared-ownership for 1 or 2 should be considered.

It is essential that any potential developer is aware that we expect new development for this target over 55 groups to include the majority of the HAPPI 2 design features, so that housing choices can support people to remain as healthy as possible, for as long as possible and to remain independent :

* Generous internal space standards – *consider 2 bed, 4 person most popular, and perhaps a small room for home office – many over 55s are business entrepreneurs too*
* Plenty of natural light in the home and in circulation spaces – *supports mental well-being and issues associated with dementia, and can prevents slips trips and falls*
* Balconies and outside space, avoiding internal corridors and single-aspect flats – *many people will be right sizing to flats / apartments from larger family properties with gardens, and most will have enjoyed garden work and growing food – supports mental well being*
* Adaptability and care aware design which is ready for emerging telecare and telecare health technologies
* Circulation spaces that encourage interaction and avoid an institutional feel – *prevents loneliness, a bigger killer than smoking in this age group*
* Shared facilities and community hubs where these are lacking in the neighbourhood – for example
* Plants, trees and the natural environment - *are able to be seen, and accessible within 10 mins walk*
* High levels of energy efficiency, with good ventilation to avoid overheating – *with reference long term issues of fuel affordability, over 70s require warmer homes to support good health, national ‘Heatwave’ strategy (LAs have a duty to cooperate and lead)*
* Extra storage for belongings and bicycles *and motorised scooters with charging points, plus off road parking. For under 70s consider 2 spaces per apartment*
* *Shared external areas such as ‘home zones’ that give priority to pedestrians*

Where all features cannot be accommodated, please request the developer to instigate early discussions with this team to discuss the relevant issues.

**Safety issues:** Safe by Design standard is preferred as older households often express concerns about security and safety outside of the home.

**Summary:**

Combining all the above factors there is scope for the market to absorb, without adverse impact, additional 2-bed, accessible, over 55 apartment style, open-market housing in Sudbury. There appears to be a lack / under supply of open market (long leasehold) age exclusive, over 55/ retirement apartments (using EAC website and Zoopla evidence) within the current housing stock of 1013 flats /apartments. It is perceived that if Belle Vue were developed for over 55s housing there would be a positive benefit to the local housing market. It will also bring £XXX in to the local economy and XXX in new council tax and New Homes Bonus.

Council’s strategic housing priority outcomes state that success would mean that there is more choice in the local housing market. The Strategic Housing team has an agreed remit to work to increase the range of housing options for the over 55s.