RACE KHG Update October 2025

Funding

Enquiries to ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) confirm that it is likely that funding for 26/27 will again not be announced until early 2026 but we are regularly asking for updates on this. The RACE executive team are requesting a meeting with the CEO of the relatively new Kent ACRE to seek their support and opinion on the continuation of a rural housing enabling service for Kent and how we can collectively ensure it remains.

Work

Tenterden Town Council requested a housing needs survey which will shortly be in circulation to identify the need for affordable housing and for older people wanting more suitable housing. They want to submit this information to ABC's new Local Plan. The Sevenoaks 5-year survey programme has now finished, and RACE is focusing on promotion of local needs housing to Parish Councils to bring more housing forward. Two further surveys are currently planned to go out soon.

The following local needs developments have completed or are in the pipeline:

- Bough Beech, Sevenoaks: 8 affordable rented homes completed (official opening September 2025)
- West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks: 7 affordable rented homes and 3 shared ownership due to complete soon
- Penshurst, Sevenoaks: site secured – plans being worked up
- Seal, Sevenoaks: 9 affordable homes onsite – due to complete December 2025
- Mersham, Ashford: site secured for 12 affordable homes
- Egerton, Ashford: planning approved for 8 affordable homes. Ongoing viability issues have now been resolved.

RACE is keen to continue looking at housing solutions for older people in rural areas to meet the needs of those who want more suitable housing for their needs but stay in their community (affordable and open market). People report wanting smaller homes, smaller gardens, single storey housing, sometimes adapted for disabilities/health needs.

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