



**Spire Homes and community partners in Rutland have worked together to secure much-needed affordable homes in Uppingham.**

### **Uppingham, Rutland**

The market town of Uppingham is a desirable place to live; its prime location and attractive buildings keep house prices and private renting costs consistently high.

Consultation with local people showed a need for extra affordable homes in the area. So Spire Homes worked in partnership with Rutland County Council, Uppingham Town Council and Westleigh Developments to find ways of meeting this need.

A site off Seaton Road showed potential – being in a beautiful rural location, but with easy access to the town centre. Spire was keen to create a close sense of community among residents.

Scheme design, layout and sustainability were also key, to ensure sympathy with the location. The properties, of timber frame construction, were also designed with mobility in mind; wider door openings, easy access to downstairs cloakrooms and front and rear level access to homes are key features.

Spire Homes successfully applied for a £30,000 grant from the Department of Trade and Industry to maximise energy-efficiency. Two-thirds of the properties benefit from solar water heating, which will achieve savings of up to 50 per cent on residents' energy bills.

The first phase of development was completed in May 2009. It includes 29 rented homes and six shared ownership units. The shared ownership homes are available to buy at £37,500, based on a 25 per cent share, with buyers paying monthly rent on the remaining 75 per cent.

The development has helped people from local communities to stay within the area, rather than having to move away due to high housing costs. Following the success of the first phase, a further seven properties are now being developed.