

Case Study: Delivering Ecohomes Excellent: the legacy of the Clarks family at ICON, Street

ICON at Street in Somerset is on the site of the original Clarks shoe factory which opened in 1825. Like many other industrialists of their time, the Clark family built terraces of model homes for their workers, along with a civic hall, library, open-air swimming pool and theatre.

The scheme has been designed in partnership with the Clark family, and with its iconic architecture and environmentally conscious design, will create a lasting legacy for both local people and the Clark family.

Plans for the site

There will be 138 dwellings, 78 houses and 60 apartments, 30 of which are for Knightstone Housing Association, and are already occupied.

The homes are all designed to meet the EcoHomes 'Excellent' standard and will achieve a 20% improvement in carbon emissions over current building regulations, with an additional 5% improvement provided by on-site renewable energy. The energy demands are minimised through a thermally efficient building envelope, an air tightness level of around 30% better than that required by the building regulations and high performance FSC timber windows.

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All ICON houses and apartments are built using a structurally insulated panel system (SIPS), made using high performance rigid insulation with zero ODP (Ozone Depletion Potential) which allows freedom and flexibility in the design of the services, windows and aesthetic appearance of the houses. The high standards of airtight construction provided by the SIPS system, coupled with mechanical ventilation and heat recovery delivers fresh air whilst minimising heat demands and lowering fuel bills. Careful thought has been given to the amount of natural light each home receives, minimising the demand for artificial lighting.

In and around the development will be a series of open spaces and landscaped zones that reflect the local landscape of Somerset. The sustainable urban drainage strategy (SUDS) is one of the most innovative features of the site. A network of swales and reed beds will attenuate surface water run-off to pre development levels whilst adding interest to the open spaces and creating habitat for native species.



The use of Modern Methods of Construction, coupled with new technologies and a complex design has been a steep learning curve. This was further complicated by the range of finishes incorporating local materials which have been used to enhance the street scenes and provide a unique sense of character.