

## Case Study - Ingress Park Development



Ingress Park was a 30 hectare brownfield site formerly used as a marine training college and paper mill.

Now the award-winning private development is a jewel in the crown of Dartford Borough Council's regeneration programme.

Situated on the Thames waterfront alongside woodland, Ingress Park features eight distinctive areas with a range of individual apartments and houses with the magnificent, restored Abbey at its centre.

The Grade II listed Abbey and ancillary listed buildings became vacant in the early 1990s and subsequently fell into disrepair. The site was identified for housing provision, but several planning applications including one for demolishing the Abbey, were refused. Site specific difficulties included industrial contamination, demolition of substantial industrial and educational buildings, flood risk and the need to extensively re- contour the site and save the existing heritage buildings.

In December 1996 the Council was approached by Crest for initial discussions on the site which at that time was in two ownerships. Dartford Borough Council produced a planning brief for the site and encouraged a dialogue with the developers to deliver the project. This enabled flexibility to reflect changing circumstances whilst ensuring that the principles of the design statement were upheld.

The aim of the project was to deliver a development solution that would not only save and restore the Abbey, but also produce a high quality, mixed use urban village which met the sustainability agenda.

High development costs meant funding the primary school was difficult. But collaboration between Dartford Borough Council the Kent Partnership and Rochester Diocese provided a school on land donated by the developer.

The current planning permission is for up to 950 units on the site. Although Crest is essentially a traditional volume house builder, they commissioned Tibbalds TM2, a leading firm of master planners and architects, to draw up a Master Plan, Character Area Study

and Design Statement. The result is a mix of architectural themes within the character areas, such as Village Heights and Abbey Boulevard.

### **Outcomes**

- restoration of a major listed building and associated follies
- public open space, with woodland walks as part of a new heritage trail, and new riverside walks as part of Green Grid
- award winning, high quality housing in a rich and varying townscape
- 95 affordable homes
- community facilities such as a primary school and local shopping
- infrastructure for a sustainable transport system
- A major change in perception of the area