

Introduction

Mistral has provided local political relations support to Pegasus Retirement Homes during a ten-year-plus programme of development to help it successfully build and market purpose-built retirement apartments on brownfield sites across the UK.

Objective

The main objective has been to use local political lobbying and community relations to help influence the outcome of planning applications. While the applications themselves of course have to be judged on their material planning considerations, Mistral's role in the process has been to help explain these planning merits to local parish and ward councillors as well as their voting public.

Strategy

Adopt an open pre-application communication policy, using well-publicised public exhibitions, to enable any local issues and concerns to be flushed out and considered ahead of the formal planning application process. Typically, our role involves:

- Conducting a political and community audit to get a thorough understanding of the area and its local political and community stakeholders
- Sourcing an appropriate venue such as a community hall or school
- Advertising in the local press/arranging for posters to be displayed
- Exhibition invite leaflet-drop to local houses with background about Pegasus, proposed plans, facts and figures and an artist's impression

- Invitation letters written to influential people such as ward councillors, followed-up with phone calls offering one-to-one briefings
- Pre-event and post-event press releases written and issued to all local media
- Comments logged to be taken on-board by the architect and included in a statement of community involvement (SCI) for submission with the planning application.

Results

Local councillors and their voting public feel that they can genuinely have a 'say' in planning each development, which in-turn can only help make applications run more smoothly. It's difficult to isolate Mistral's role in the planning application process, however anecdotal evidence suggests engaging with the local community results in fewer objections and therefore faster planning success.



Two-thirds of owners are local who want to remain close to family and friends

Pegasus owners are quiet home during increased leisure time

Public exhibition: We will be holding a public exhibition of our plans at Mary's Church, St. James Street, on Monday 15 September from 10.30am to 1.30pm.

Tentative for the development: The final planning application for the development will be submitted to Devon Council, National Park, Ashford, over the next few weeks. It is not likely to be completed. It is a decision to be made on the application.

Pegasus apartment numbers	1st floor	2nd floor	Total
1 Bed	6	6	12
2 Bed	9	15	24

Did you know?

- The average number of visits in a GP in a year by a sheltered housing resident is 4.2 compared to 5 for the national population of 75+
- 80% of sheltered housing residents believe that living in retirement accommodation helps to preserve their independence

For more information about Pegasus and its current developments please visit www.pegasus-homes.co.uk or call 0800 768 8844


