

Social Housing in Mawsley - the role of the Mawsley Villagers Association in ensuring those houses are a part of the village community.

There are four areas of social housing in Mawsley. When the first tranche was being planned the Mawsley Villagers Association (MVA) got directly involved in the design of them.

The Housing Association's plans originally were for simple houses, all of almost identical design, set in regimented surroundings. This was in marked contrast to the village's private housing which had been designed with almost no two houses looking identical and with widespread use of idiosyncratic design features to make the area look like a typical Northamptonshire village which had developed unevenly over time.

The MVA was most concerned that the social housing, as planned, would be visibly different and therefore readily identifiable as such; which would not be fair to its residents. The MVA was determined that these homes should observe the same design ethos applied to the private houses and be indistinguishable from them.

It was not easy to persuade the Borough Council Planning Dept. to allow the plans to be changed but through the MVA's persistence the original plans were eventually thrown out at Planning Committee. Revised designs, which were consistent with the design ethos for private housing, were then submitted and approved. This approach was adopted for all the subsequent phases of social housing.

The end result has been that looking around the village it is not possible to identify which are the social housing areas. And therefore people in those areas are as much a part of the community as anyone else.

The MVA has achieved many things for the village, but probably this has been one of its greatest and most lasting achievements.