

# Increasing rural opportunities...

**S**paceworks is a specialist design-led live/work and regeneration developer that has worked on mixed use schemes from 15,000ft<sup>2</sup> to over 1,000,000ft<sup>2</sup>. The team behind Spaceworks has been involved in creating high quality live/work schemes and neighbourhoods for over 15 years.

The company was born out of New York's dilapidated SoHo Loft district in the late 1980s, moving to London's commercial fringes in the 1990s. Spaceworks is now concentrating on Britain's regions and is being hailed as one of Britain's leading rural live/work developers.

The team creates innovative schemes that are of the highest possible standards in design and sustainability. The Spaceworks approach puts placemaking at the heart of its philosophy, emphasising the importance of site, social context and the environment. It then provides great looking, high specification, flexible and good value mixed use space for contemporary working and living. End occupiers are often drawn from the creative and technology sectors.



Spaceworks identifies undervalued locations with a shortage of appropriate space where live/work can provide the catalyst to revitalise an area. Alex Shaw, a Spaceworks Director says: "We believe that live/work is now maturing. Many local authorities shunned live/work after some poor schemes by inexperienced developers, particularly in London. But this mistrust and lack of understanding is being replaced by a realisation that specialist design and experience leads to successful live/work schemes. We're finding that live/work is now offering local government huge regeneration possibilities and is also being seen as particularly effective in rural areas."

Once Spaceworks has identified the right locations, its policy of providing great space at affordable prices encourages influential, high quality live/workers and businesses to move to areas they would otherwise neglect.

In the regions, these will often be workers returning to where they grew up – to areas that were previously missing the type of space they needed. Occupiers are driven by the search for a better quality of life, such as the elimination of the daily commute.

Alex Shaw adds: "Today many live/workers need to interact and network with likeminded people nearby while also maintaining the existing networks from their previous locations. We're very aware that technology is the crucial driver that may even reverse the initial brain drain from rural areas to larger conurbations."

...for live/work schemes...

## Current rural projects include:

### Model Farm, Ross on Wye:

Development consultants to Ross Area Partnership, working with Herefordshire Council and Advantage West Midlands, to create a new build live/work eco 'village' of around 50 units on surplus industrial land anchoring a mixed use employment generating scheme of some 10ha.

**Hanger 45, Yatesbury:** Recently gaining planning approval from North Wiltshire DC, this is a highly sustainable, groundbreaking conversion of a very large commercial hangar into 29 live/work units and extensive commercial and community facilities, including a business 'hub' and village shop. Hanger 45 is in an AONB and adjacent to Grade II\* listed buildings. The scheme aims to achieve an Ecohomes Excellent BREEAM rating. Yatesbury is a small, depopulating village between Marlborough and Calne.

**West End Barns, Marshfield:** The conversion of redundant industrial storage buildings into 17 live/work units within a conservation area and AONB in a rural village between Chippenham and Bath.

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