



23 January 2020

## **Countryside Properties PLC Q1 2020 Trading Statement**

Countryside Properties plc (the "Group"), the UK's leading mixed-tenure developer, is today issuing a trading update for the 13-week period from 1 October 2019 to 31 December 2019.

### **Q1 Operational Highlights**

- Total completions of 1,097 homes (Q1 2019: 1,094 homes)
- Private average selling price ("ASP") of £394,000 (Q1 2019: £395,000)
- Net reservation rate<sup>1</sup> up 29% to 0.81 (Q1 2019: 0.63)
- Average open sales outlets at 59 (Q1 2019: 58)
- Total forward order book up 65% at £1,565m (Q1 2019: £946m)
- Net debt of £62m (Q1 2019: £12m)

<sup>1</sup> Net reservations per open outlet per week

### **Group Performance**

Trading was strong throughout the quarter, with the net reservation rate up 29% at 0.81 (Q1 2019: 0.63) driven by a strong market along with the quality of open outlets. This resulted in a 46% increase in the private forward order book on the prior year to £314m (Q1 2019: £215m). Demand for affordable and PRS homes has also remained robust and overall, our total forward order book is up 65% to £1,565m, a record level for the quarter. We are active on a total of 142 sites (Q1 2019: 129 sites) of which 60 are open selling outlets (Q1 2019: 54).

### **Divisional Performance**

Our Partnerships division delivered total completions of 855 homes (Q1 2019: 850 homes), in line with the prior year despite some delayed site starts. We had a very strong quarter for new business, securing 4,165 plots including a scheme to build 581 homes in Waltham Forest, London, 700 homes in Salford, Greater Manchester and a total of 1,673 homes for our newly established regions. Our modular panel factory is now operating two shifts and we have identified a site for our second factory which we expect to become operational during 2021.

Our Housebuilding division delivered completions in line with the prior year at 242 homes (Q1 2019: 244 homes). During the period we secured new options for 350 homes in Bedfordshire and 400 homes in Knebworth, Hertfordshire as well as securing outline planning for 1,138 homes in Maldon, Essex and 750 homes in Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire. Overall our land bank stood at 24,957 plots (Q1 2019: 20,118).

### **Outlook**

We continue to see strong customer demand across both divisions for all tenures of homes. We enter the second quarter with a record forward order book which positions us well for the remainder of the current year. Build programmes remain on track for the full year and we anticipate further growth in the number of open outlets in the second quarter. We remain focused on exceptional customer satisfaction and continue to track at HBF 5-star builder status. With some of the political uncertainty now having eased and sales levels in line with expectations for this point in the year, we remain on track to deliver our full year plans.

### **Iain McPherson, Group Chief Executive, commented:**

"The business is performing well and we enter the second quarter of FY 2020 with strong customer demand across all tenures and a record forward order book. We have had another excellent quarter for new business wins across all regions, further strengthening the foundations for future growth. Our modular panel factory is performing well and we are pleased to be progressing plans for a second modular panel factory. We continue to remain focused on quality, safety and high levels of customer satisfaction and look forward to the rest of the year with confidence."

- Ends -

Enquiries:

Countryside Properties – 01277 260 000

Iain McPherson – Group Chief Executive  
Mike Scott – Group Chief Financial Officer  
Victoria Prior – Investor Relations & Strategy Director

Brunswick Group LLP – 020 7404 5959

Nina Coad  
Oliver Sherwood

Note to editors:

Countryside is the UK's leading mixed-tenure developer through its two divisions, Partnerships and Housebuilding.

Countryside's Partnerships division was established over 30 years ago, specialising in estate regeneration, with operations in London, the South East, the North West, the Midlands and Yorkshire. It works mainly on public sector owned and brownfield land, in partnership with local authorities and housing associations to develop private, affordable and PRS homes. It recently established a modular panel manufacturing facility in Warrington to improve quality and reduce build times on site. Its developments include large scale urban regeneration projects at Beam Park, Rainham, Acton Gardens, Ealing and Rochester Riverside, Medway.

Countryside's Housebuilding division benefits from an industry leading strategic land bank which is focused around outer London and the Home Counties. It builds family homes, with a focus on placemaking and selling to local owner occupiers. Its developments include a number of large-scale projects including Beaulieu Park, Essex, Springhead Park, Ebbsfleet and Tattenhoe Park, Milton Keynes.

Following six years of continuous growth in volumes, Countryside delivered 5,733 homes in the twelve months to September 2019 – 4,425 through its Partnerships division and 1,308 through its Housebuilding division, with a mix of private for sale, PRS and affordable homes. Revenues were £1,422.8m with 92.5% customer satisfaction equivalent to HBF 5-star rating. It retains a strong balance sheet and is focused on delivering quality homes with sector leading growth. It was listed on the London Stock Exchange in February 2016 as a constituent of the FTSE 250.

For more information see [www.countrysideproperties.com](http://www.countrysideproperties.com) or follow @CountrysideProp on Twitter.