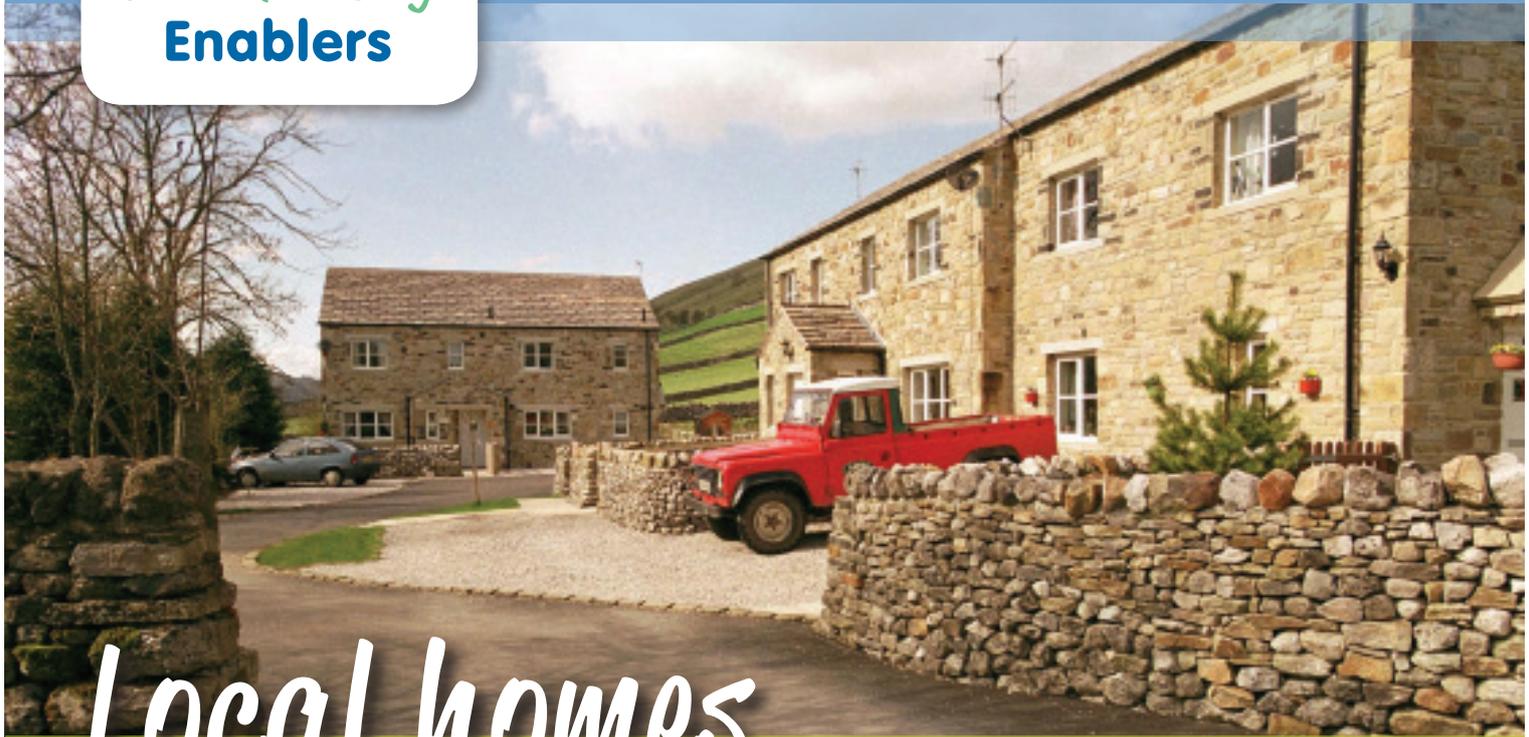




*Rural Housing*  
**Enablers**

# Year End Report

2019-2020



*Local homes ...*

for local people

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# Introduction

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There is an urgent need to protect and build more affordable housing in the rural areas of North and East Yorkshire and building these homes remains as challenging as ever - something recognised by the North Yorkshire Rural Commission. Many rural communities are in danger of breaking apart, as young families and those on modest incomes are priced out of their local housing market, and local services close.

We want to ensure that our local communities have access to high quality, sustainable, affordable homes. The work done by the Rural Housing Enabler Network is central to ensuring that these new homes are delivered across our rural communities. We want our rural areas to be accessible, sustainable and affordable for local people. Through the network, we remain committed to tackling the challenges associated with rural housing delivery, in particular the high cost of building new affordable homes. And we will continue to push for additional investment to address the high development costs associated with rural housing delivery.

Through this report we demonstrate that rural housing is more than just a numbers game! We know that rural housing does not fair well if you focus solely on numbers. Due to their location and size, rural affordable housing developments are high cost and low yield. However, the benefits these homes bring to communities are inestimable - new affordable homes change lives and shape our rural places.

As the coronavirus crisis developed, we - like all organisations - had to adapt and respond to the challenges this posed. We are continuing to work with developers, partners, land owners and communities, albeit in new ways, to address the ongoing challenges caused by affordability and rurality.

Rural Housing Week is happening in a different format this year and we have produced this Year End Report to promote the great work that has been taking place in our rural towns and villages across North and East Yorkshire. We are celebrating that to those in need, a safe, secure and affordable home is life changing.



Councillor Richard Foster

**COUNCILLOR RICHARD FOSTER**  
CHAIR NORTH YORKSHIRE RURAL HOUSING ENABLER NETWORK

In Rural Housing Week 2020 we support ACRE in their 'asks' for:

- Stable funding for Rural Housing Enablers
- Grant aid that provides truly affordable homes
- National and local planning policy that enables rural affordable housing to be delivered
- Political leadership at all levels - parish, council and government

# 2019/20 programme delivery - the numbers

We have had two record breaking years for rural housing delivery in North and East Yorkshire - with completions in 2019/20 not far behind 2018/19 (405). Whilst numbers were below the 423 forecast at the start of the year we could not have anticipated the year ending with a pandemic. This impacted on delivery in the final quarter - only 85 against a forecast of 254. Fortunately, above anticipated completions in the previous three quarters ensured that the impact on the number of homes delivered in 2019/20 was minimal.

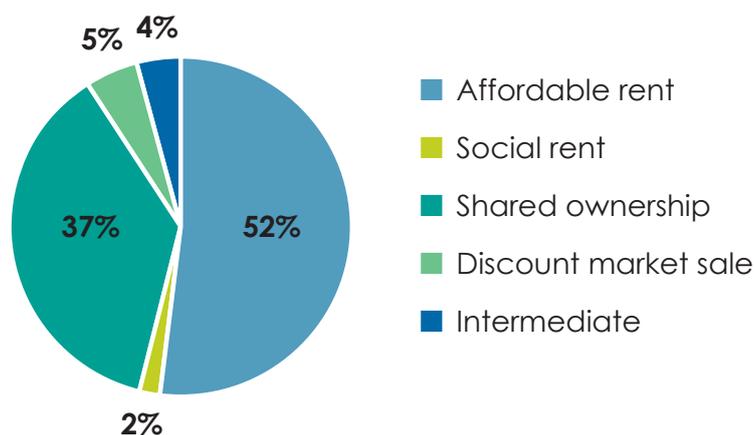
	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Forecast affordable housing completions</b>	<b>423</b>	73	45	51	254
<b>Actual affordable housing completions</b>	<b>370</b>	76	86	123	85

Local Authority	Completion Forecast	Completions Actual	% Actual v Forecast
Craven	24	18	75%
Hambleton	13	12	92%
Harrogate	186	147	79%
Richmondshire	6	6	100%
Ryedale	18	24	133%
Scarborough	34	34	100%
Selby	88	89	101%
East Riding	54	40	74%
<b>Total</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>87%</b>

National Park	Completion Forecast	Completions Actual	% Actual v Forecast
YDNPA	0		
NYMNPA	16	20	125%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>125%</b>

Over half of the homes delivered were for affordable rent (52%), over a third (37%) for shared ownership, discounted sale was 5%, other intermediate products 4% and social rent 2%.

## Tenure of rural affordable homes



# What's been happening around the patch?

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## **Craven:** Laurel Croft, Embsay

Embsay is a village in the Craven district of North Yorkshire, situated about two miles north-east of Skipton. It is a split ward with part of it falling within the Yorkshire Dales National Park, and the southeast portion within Craven District Council's jurisdiction.

The village close to the edge of Lower Wharfedale and is popular with train enthusiasts as well as walkers and cyclists who are keen to explore the southern Dales. It one of



the main stops on the popular Embsay and Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, a heritage line that reopened in 1981 using the route that originally linked Ilkley with Skipton.

Embsay is a popular village within the Craven District and as a result house prices are high with two bed terraces selling in the region of £220,000. For many local people who have lived there all their lives, this has left them unable to afford their own home. Their only option has been to remain living with family or move away to access more affordable housing.

Laurel Croft is a development of nine natural stone houses built by local developer Snell Homes. Of the nine homes being developed, two are being provided as shared ownership homes.

The homes will be purchased from Snell Homes by Craven District Council, which is a Registered Provider, and then resold to those who qualify\*. Shares of between 25% and 70% will be made available. As with all shared ownership homes in Designated Protected Areas, the owners will not be able to purchase more than an 80% share in the home to ensure that they remain affordable in perpetuity.

It is anticipated that these homes will be marketed in the next couple of months and will be ready for occupation by August/September 2020.

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\*Qualification for a home is dependent on a person meeting the local connection criteria outlined within the Section 106 agreement and also having an application approved for shared ownership via Help to Buy.

## EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE: New Housing at Hutton Cranswick

A new affordable housing scheme was completed in June 2019 in the village of Hutton Cranswick in the East Riding. Hutton Cranswick lies just a few miles south of Driffield on the road to Beverley and has had no new affordable housing built for many years.

In partnership with the parish council, a housing needs survey was completed by the East Riding RHE, David Siddle in 2016. The survey found there was a significant number of village households with housing needs that could not be met by market housing or by the existing supply of council housing.

A rural exception site had been identified on the outskirts of the village within easy walking distance of the school, shops and the railway station. With established housing association, Together Housing, and contractor Partner Construction a mix of units consisting of six homes for affordable rent and four homes for shared ownership was agreed. The scheme comprised four two bed bungalows; four two bed houses and two three bed houses. The financing of the scheme was helped by cross subsidy from the sale of two additional open market homes.

The scheme was completed in 2019 and all units let to households who either lived in the village or who had strong local connections through an agreed local letting policy.

One new resident is Brenda Smith. Brenda relies on a frame walker to get around indoors and is confined to a wheelchair when she leaves the house. The bungalow is ideal for her needs and enabled her to move from unsuitable housing in Hull where she was housebound. Now she is much nearer her daughter who, as a long standing resident in the village, lives close by and can look after her, take her out and generally be on hand. Brenda says she feels like she has got her life back since moving in to the development off Hutton Road.

This is the first new affordable housing scheme to be delivered through a rural exception site in the East Riding for around 10 years.



## HAMBLETON: Huby and Carlton Miniott

During a period of uncertainty for both landowners, developers and communities during Hambleton District Council's Local Plan review, many landowners have been cautious and reluctant to dispose of their land assets. This has made bringing forward Rural Exception Sites challenging. Despite these difficulties, Amanda Madden, RHE for Hambleton, has worked tirelessly in partnership with Broadacres Housing Association, the parish councils, landowners and residents to bring forward sites, specifically in Huby and Carlton Miniott.

## Carlton Miniott

Carlton Miniott is a small unique scheme of seven terraced homes, which started with a conversation between Broadacres and Moody Construction. This scheme has maximised the land offered for development. Designed by InGreen and built by Moody Construction of Northallerton, the scheme provides a range of terraced houses and flats



comprising one one bed flat and one two bed flat, four two bed houses and one three bed house - which all exceed the Nationally Described Space Standards. The homes compliment the characteristics of the village streetscape. These homes have been built using the Fabric First Approach, whereby the property is contained within a 'thermal envelope' derived from insulation, minimising the need for energy consumption and keeping running costs low.

These homes enable local people to remain living in their home village, and their children can attend the local primary school, which is a short walk away from the development.

Amanda and the Team at Broadacres have worked hard to ensure that construction continued during the lock down, with only a few days lost to the redesigning of site processes to be Covid 19 compliant. The homes are on target to complete by August 2020. This scheme has benefitted from £315,000 of Homes England funding, topped up with £25,000 local authority funding and will offer both rented and shared ownership properties for local people.

## Huby



Amanda Madden has been working with Broadacres for a number of years trying to deliver affordable homes for local people in Huby. This time they seem to have met with success, showing that in rural housing delivery persistence pays. The builders (ESH) are on site and working in line with Covid 19 compliant practices.

The site, to the south of Robins Lane, is in the centre of the village, adjacent to the local primary school.

The application for 12 dwellings was submitted in January 2019, to meet an identified housing need following a survey carried out by Amanda. Huby is a hinterland village that lies on the outskirts of Easingwold. It is a high price area with the average house price of £236,350 and average income of £23,670, equating to a house price to income ratio of 10.1. This makes it extremely hard for local people to get on the property ladder and no rented properties have been delivered since 2004. The supply of affordable homes locally is extremely pressurised. Since 1980 35% of Broadacres homes in the village have been sold under the Right to Buy, so the addition of new homes for affordable rent is much needed.

The scheme was designed and presented for approval by Michael Dyson Associates Ltd on behalf of Broadacres and provides 12 homes comprising eight two bed houses and four three bed houses, which all meet Nationally Described Space Standards. The homes will have two car parking spaces each and outdoor space at the front as well as rear gardens. This scheme has benefitted from £486,000 Homes England funding. The four three bed properties will be offered for shared ownership and the remaining properties for affordable rent. There will be a local connection criteria for occupation limited to Huby initially but extending out to Easingwold sub area if required.

Access to the scheme (Hayfields) is directly off Tollerton Road and has been created by reducing the large garden of an existing Broadacres property.

## HARROGATE

For the past 25 years Harrogate Borough Council has been working hard to top 200 affordable homes per annum. In the past year it has delivered 345 - 147 of them being rural. Whilst these homes are mostly delivered through Section 106 Agreements, the RHE, Sarah Close, has negotiated hard to make sure that all these rural homes are of a good size and well integrated with the market homes on these sites. This works means that the affordable homes have

bathrooms with windows, that there is space to eat that does not mean a plate on your knee on the sofa in front of the TV, and that homes have an entrance hall, so that you do not step from the pavement into your living room. All of this takes some doing and has been possible thanks to Sarah's hard work.



*Section 106 affordable homes at Bishop Monkton*

## RICHMONDSHIRE

Getting families and young people back into the Dales has been a long term priority for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA). As RHE for Richmondshire, Amanda Madden has been working in partnership with the YDNPA to identify potential sites where there is a need for affordable housing. The YDNPA provided a list of possible sites for Amanda to appraise, prioritise and

progress. She has also been working with the Church of England and the Methodist Circuit to review the use of redundant churches and chapels with a view to bringing them forward for affordable housing where possible. Discussions are ongoing regarding chapels at Asygarth and Middleham. A full range of tenures (affordable and social rented, shared ownership and discount market sale) will be considered to meet the need that has been identified through Housing Need Surveys carried out during 2019/20.

Within Richmondshire district there are a number of large development sites coming forward - Colburn, Catterick, Leyburn - providing a range of affordable units with a range of tenure, size and types. Work is also underway in West Witton, following approval by YDNPA, on a scheme to deliver nine market homes (two, three and four bed) and eight affordable homes (two and three bed houses) with Broadacres and Harforth Homes. There has been strong local support for this scheme, especially from the parish council, so it is great to see it start on site.



*Construction work on site at West Witton in the Yorkshire Dales National Park*

## **RYEDALE:** Swanland Park, Helmsley (North York Moors National Park Authority)

Helmsley is a traditional North Yorkshire market town within the District of Ryedale, 14 miles east of Thirsk. The town is an established tourist destination and, with a population of just under 3,000 people, it is the largest settlement in the North York Moors National Park. The site

itself is in the National Park and is located on the eastern side of Helmsley, just beyond Carlton Road, and on the northern side of the A170.



In 2016, permission was granted to Wharfedale Homes for 60 dwellings on the site of which 24 units were to be affordable. The 24 affordable homes comprise of 13 one-bed flats/maisonettes and 11 two bed houses. These homes are for social rent (13 flats, and five two bed houses), and Discount for Sale (six two bed houses) sold directly to purchasers by the developer with allocations managed by Ryedale District Council.

The scheme substantially accords with the principles set out in the Development Brief for site NYMH1 from the Helmsley Plan, including the key points of the provision of 40% affordable housing, a high quality design, retention of the remnant orchard and a suitable mix of housing including single storey dwellings.

As the land was owned by the Duncombe Park Estate, it was agreed as part of the permission, that the affordable units would be offered first to the Estate. Unlike on another site nearby which had had the same agreement, the Estate declined to take the units and hence Broadacres Housing Association secured all 18 social rented homes.

Ryedale District Council, as Housing Authority, worked closely with Broadacres to hold two open events in Helmsley so that local people could register their interest in the properties, both rented and discount for sale. These events were organised by Colin Huby as Ryedale RHE - this included delivering flyers to every household in the parish to ensure that local people were fully aware of the opportunity.

The lettings criteria was based primarily on the applicant's local connection and housing need with the properties being allocated initially on bedroom need. The choice of tenants and rent levels was determined by the district council in consultation with Broadacres. The homes were completed in March 2020.

## **SELBY:** Carwood - Call for Land

In March this year, we completed a call for land within Cawood to identify and evaluate possible rural exception sites after a local Housing Needs Survey identified the need for 12 affordable homes within the Parish. Matthew Brown, RHE for Selby, organised a subsequent 'Parish walkabout' to review the possible sites, at which Selby District Council's Planning Team provided guidance and advice as to the suitability of the identified sites to interested registered providers and the parish council. Work is currently being done to finalise a shortlist of three possible sites so that Matthew can progress these with the parish council and RP partners. This inclusive approach establishes a sound basis from which to progress the development of a rural housing scheme to meet housing need within the local community of Cawood.

# Community Led Housing update

The REACH Hub website for community led housing remains operational with work to outsource the hub delayed due to capacity issues. However it remains our intention to find a partner to take over and further develop the Hub going forward.

During 2019/20 the YNYER Strategic Housing Partnership used some of its community led housing resources to fund accreditation training, not just for the RHEs but for others working with community groups on housing projects. These sessions have been attended by the RHEs and local authority development officers, as well as colleagues from Community First Yorkshire, Broadacres, and the Humber and the Wolds Rural Community Council. All participants work with community groups and were able to enhance their learning by sharing their learning experiences using real time case studies. The accreditation covers all aspects of community led housing, including:

- the legal requirements for setting up and managing groups
- when and how to engage with communities
- funding - how and where to secure finance
- how to identify a site and take it through the planning process
- allocations and lettings
- long term planned maintenance and how to budget for this

Through the training, participants are now equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to work alongside groups looking to develop community led housing projects. We are working with Community Led Homes to adapt the training so that participants can complete the fourth and final module.

The RHEs have been working with colleagues and communities across the patch on a range of Community Led Housing projects.

## HAMBLETON: Burneston Almshouses

Burneston Almshouses are in the centre of the village - they are owned by the Matthew Robinson Trust, and managed by local community members as Trustees. For many years the properties have been well managed and always full. However, in recent years it has become harder to find suitable tenants that meet the criteria of the constitution for which the Trust was established due to the poor condition of the properties compared to other stock in the locality.

The Trust owns the almshouses and old school room (which are within one Grade II\* listed building), the old Victorian school (currently rented out to a private nursery) and the Victorian school masters house. Four properties form part of the project and need to be sympathetically refurbished - the Victorian school is excluded. This has been an exciting and interesting partnership between Broadacres and Hambleton's RHE, Amanda Madden, working alongside the Trust. The current proposal is to refurbish the almshouses, extend the Schoolmasters House and convert the old school room within the listed building. The scheme has been designed by PH & S Architects. To date, financial advice and support has been received from The Almshouse Association, Almshouse Consortium (Homes England), the Charity Bank, Hambleton District Council's community led housing fund, and the Trust's reserves.

Broadacres is acting as the Development Agents and, upon completion, it is proposed that they manage the allocations on behalf of the Trust.



## HARROGATE: Masham

In Harrogate, we are proud of our Section 106 record and the number of quality homes we have delivered this year, but sometimes it is the smallest schemes that take the most work and make us proudest. Jenny Kerfoot, Development Manager at Harrogate Borough Council, admits that this year has led to her becoming a convert to community led housing. In Masham four apartments, a grocers, a heritage centre and a listed oven are now well and truly on course, with the appointment of Jan Reed, Project Manager and local enthusiast whose brief is to prepare the scheme for full planning approval.

The Board says: "The project is in good shape. Covid 19 has caused the resignations of several directors though pressures of work, but a new core team is in place, sufficient to maintain the project's momentum, and a project manager appointed whose brief is to prepare the scheme for full planning approval, commission and review feasibility studies, establish full public and representative awareness and support, and submit capital funding applications. The Board sees this as being achievable by the end of November 2020".

Enthusiasm is catching...

## SCARBOROUGH: Lealholm Community Land Trust

Lealholm Community Land Trust (CLT) is a community-led housing group set up in 2018 to provide affordable housing for the local community in Lealholm village and the wider parish of Glaisdale. The steering group was initially granted £4,850 by Scarborough Borough Council to undertake community development work and set up as a community-led housing organisation. The group became Lealholm CLT Limited and in late 2018 became constituted as a Charitable Community Benefits Society with community benefit objectives.

Over the past 18 months the group has been working with Scarborough Council's Housing Services team and Colin Huby, the Scarborough RHE, to develop a community-led housing scheme within Lealholm. Local concerns regarding the lack of affordable housing in the village meant that residents were worried about the village's sustainability. Colin undertook a feasibility appraisal to explore the potential for an affordable housing scheme in the village. Working in partnership with the North York Moors National Park Planning Authority and Glaisdale Parish Council, he identified 17 households in housing need. Based on these findings, the National Park Authority indicated that a development of eight to ten properties would be acceptable. At the same time, Colin worked with the Park Authority and parish council to identify suitable sites for affordable housing in the village and a preferred site within the centre of the village, next to the public car park, was subsequently found.

Following a procurement exercise, Native Architects was appointed to undertake a feasibility study, through which proposals for a scheme for 12 homes has been proposed. The scheme includes a community play area and orchard. A viability appraisal is underway, following which the CLT will be looking to appoint a development partner.

*Lealholm Open Day held in the Ley Hall in November 2017*



## RICHMONDshire: Askrigg

After the annual RHE Conference in 2016 the Secretary and Treasurer of the Askrigg Foundation decided to explore options for the future use of the Foundation building in the village. The building is managed by a group of Trustees and provided a shop on the ground floor with office space above. Over recent years retaining tenants and maintaining the standard of the building had become increasingly difficult.



*The Foundation building in Askrigg, Wensleydale*

A Housing Needs Survey identified a lack of smaller affordable housing in the Parish and the Trustees, with the support of the parish council, decided to work with Amanda in her role as RHE to look for some solutions. Amanda has been working closely with the Trustees and planners at the YDNPA to come up with possible solutions for the building, given its historic nature and location within a Conservation Area. An architect has now been appointed by the Trustees to develop a housing scheme for the Foundation building.

## Local plan roundup

Local Planning Authority	Local Plan Status	Updates
Craven	Plan adopted Nov 2019	Preparation of supplementary planning documents ongoing.
East Riding	Local Plan Review underway with consultation draft due for publication between September and December 2020. Following on from the consultation, a pre-submission version of the Plan will be prepared which the council aims to do in mid-2021 before submitting for the final examination in public in late 2021/early 2022.	The Draft Local Plan will include revised policies and, in some instances additional or replacement allocations (sites).
Hambleton	Local Plan submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 31 March 2020.	The council is in discussion with the Inspectorate to agree on potential dates and the practicalities for moving the examination on to the hearings stage. Due to Covid-19 precautions, it is likely that some of the hearing session could be dealt with virtually but this matter is still to be fully resolved.
Harrogate	The Harrogate District Local Plan 2014 - 2035 was adopted on 4 March 2020.	An Adoption Statement, the Adopted Plan, the Sustainability Appraisal and details of where to view the documents will be available on the council's website shortly.

Richmondshire	The current Local Plan for Richmondshire (outside of the YDNP) is the Local Plan Core Strategy 2012-2028 (adopted December 2014).	The council is currently producing a new Local Plan (2018-2035) which will include a review and update of the Core Strategy Policies, a Masterplan for Catterick Garrison, Site Allocations, Directions of Growth and Detailed Development Management Policies. The Preferred Options (Reg 18) version of the new Local Plan and supporting evidence is currently being finalised and is expected to be published for consultation this summer. The council, at this time, anticipates adopting the new Local Plan by the end of 2021 following the examination in public.
Ryedale	The Local Plan Strategy was adopted in 2013 and the Sites Document was adopted in 2019.	A review of the plan will start in 2020/21. The council will publish its Local Development Scheme at the end of the year.
Scarborough	Local Plan adopted in July 2017.	The process of review has started and the council anticipates consulting on an Issues and Options Paper in the summer of 2020. A revised Plan is some way off but the council is currently aiming for adoption of the revised Plan in early 2024.
Selby	In September 2019 the council approved preparation of a new Local Plan.	A consultation was held between January and March 2020, from which comments are currently being processed.
North York Moors	The Local Plan has been through Examination (November 2019) and was found sound subject to modifications. The Modifications have been consulted on (March-April 2020) and the Inspectors Final Report along with Final Modifications was received on 15 May 2020. The next step is adoption and we anticipate that the Plan will be formally adopted at the NPA/AGM meeting on 27 July 2020.	As the Plan is at this advanced stage weight is being given to it in planning decisions although until adopted the 2008 Core Strategy and Development Policies Document remains extant.
Yorkshire Dales	YDNPA is preparing a new Local Plan for 2023 - 2040 to cover the whole National Park area (including South Lakeland, Eden and Lancaster).	Consultation is underway, with three strategic options papers pending focusing on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the level of ambition for the new Plan</li> <li>2. the spatial strategy</li> <li>3. housing land supply options.</li> </ol>

## STAFF CHANGES

In 2019 we were sad to see Lily (RHE for Selby) leave us for pastures new, she now works for Karbon Homes, so hopefully our paths may still cross. Congratulations also to Lily on becoming Mrs Cripp - she's had a busy year! Lily has been replaced at Selby by Matthew Brown. Matthew has been working in resident involvement at Selby for a number of years and has a wealth of knowledge on North Yorkshire Home Choice, as well as Section 106s and Local Letting Plans. Feel free to contact Matthew and say hello if you have not yet had the chance to meet him (all RHE contact details are available at the end of the report).



We also said goodbye to Sarah Hall who left to take up a new role at Homes England. Sharon Graham took up post as 'the new Sarah' in September 2019.

## NORTH YORKSHIRE RURAL COMMISSION

North Yorkshire County Council set up the North Yorkshire Rural Commission to review the challenges facing rural communities across the County and to help address the crisis in rurality. The Commission's job is to provide an action plan and workable recommendations to maximise sustainability in our rural areas. In February we were invited to attend the Commission's Evidence Session on rural housing. We had ten minutes to brief Commissioners on the challenges and possible solutions for rural housing. These were the key messages we highlighted:

1. We are not delivering enough affordable homes. Current housing delivery figures for the Partnership area have improved over the YNYER Housing Strategy period and are in line with the 5,000 homes per annum target. However, whilst the level of affordable housing delivery has improved (1,103 homes during 2018/19 and 597 at the midway point in 2019/20) we are still falling short of the 32% target of 1,600 homes per annum. There are barriers to the delivery of affordable housing more widely that are exacerbated in rural contexts. Rural completions are an important element of new affordable housing supply - by September 2019 they made up 26% of this year's supply. Completions through the RHE programme have delivered new affordable rural homes at a consistent level for many years and the programme provides an important resource, enhancing the enabling capacity of local authorities and providing a resource to work alongside local communities to help address affordable housing needs. Without the RHE Programme delivering rural affordable homes would be much harder.
2. Affordability remains a key and very real issue for North Yorkshire, with affordability ratios over nine times local incomes in three of the districts, without change to the county's low wage economy things are unlikely to improve. Ensuring that we deliver sufficient affordable homes to enable our rural communities to be sustainable is essential.
3. High level commitment is needed- there are many challenges to delivering rural affordable homes and no quick fixes or easy answers. It is encouraging that network members can see possible solutions to some of the challenges we face, although many of these need 'buy in' both politically and at a high level from local authorities and RPs. The network feels that a 'rural housing champion' acting as an influencer would help to raise the profile of rural housing issues and tackle barriers to delivery.

4. Lack of capacity is an issue. Austerity has left many authorities with a depleted enabling role, which hampers delivery on a scheme by scheme basis and beyond. More resources to enhance local authorities' enabling role are needed. That said, there are skills shortages across the sector, and recruitment to vacant posts is not straightforward - LAs are unable to compete with the higher wages offered through RPs and private developers.
5. The cost of delivering rural housing can be prohibitive. Whilst grants are available through Homes England to fund the delivery of new homes, the high cost of rural development is not reflected in the grant, which when combined with higher ongoing management and maintenance costs can make rural housing an unattractive proposition to RPs.

Ultimately, we need to continue to work together if we are to address the challenges faced by rural communities and maximise the impact of our investments.

The findings of the Commission have been delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic and an updated timescale for delivery of the final report is awaited. More information about the Commission is available here: [northyorks.gov.uk/north-yorkshire-rural-commission](https://northyorks.gov.uk/north-yorkshire-rural-commission)

## HOMES ENGLAND LATEST

Nationally, although official statistics have yet to be published, last year was a very positive one for Homes England, achieving our key targets for starts, completions and expenditure. This was achieved in spite of the final quarter seeing the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. Thanks are due to all our partners who helped in this significant achievement and to get schemes over the line.

The beginning of April also marked the implementation of the new Homes England operating model. This saw the creation of a dedicated Growth Team, of which I am a part, looking to grow the grant funded Affordable Housing Programme and build a pipeline of investable schemes. I am the Growth Manager for North Yorkshire so please contact me with any new proposals or queries. I am already engaged with the various groups operating in the area and am happy to meet (at least virtually) wherever it will be useful. It is something of a return for me as I have covered this patch previously so it's good to be back!

In March the Chancellor announced a new £12bn Affordable Homes programme from 2021. Further details have yet to be released but this is good news for the sector going forward. There are also likely to be further announcements on the Move On Fund. In the meantime we are now in the final year of the 2016-21 programme and we are closely managing the existing budget. There is some provision at present for spend in 21/22 for schemes which will complete after March 21 but this is limited and requires careful management, especially as schemes slip due to Covid-19 delays. Homes England is well placed to get feedback from partners across all sectors on the impact of Covid-19 and we are engaged in feeding this into central government to help shape the response and recovery. I would welcome any market intelligence on this topic, for example relating to delays on site, shortage of materials, impact on land availability and prices. We also need to have realistic forecasts for schemes which are delayed.

Whilst grant for new schemes will be at a premium in the short term, the key message is that we remain open for new business and welcome any new bids which must start by March 2021. Rural homes, although not a specific target, remain a strategic priority for many of the partners we work with, such as the LEP and the North Yorkshire authorities. Homes England also continues to promote Modern Methods of Construction and is promoting good design.

I look forward to working with you all in the future and delivering more high quality affordable rural homes in North and East Yorkshire. I can be contacted at [Richard.panter@homesengland.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.panter@homesengland.gov.uk) or on 0113 394 9363.

*Richard Panter*  
**HOMES ENGLAND**

# Here to help

Whilst we all look forward to getting back to more normal working arrangements, as a team we have embraced new ways of working remotely, as have our partners, Parish Councils and landowners - we are all learning how to hold meetings differently.

Your local RHE is available to discuss land offers, conduct housing need surveys, present reports via hard copy or online meetings, and submit planning applications and help in any way they can to enable new affordable rural homes, so, please continue to make use of the RHE capacity in your area.

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