



North Yorkshire Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2010 - 15



Annual Report 2012 - 13

northyorkshirestrategichousingpartnership.co.uk



Last year, despite continued housing market uncertainty, we delivered 536 additional affordable homes across North Yorkshire. This adds to our track record of delivery against our Strategic Priorities through close partnership working with a wide range of organisations. The landscape for the development of new affordable housing is changing, with grant rates reducing and greater uncertainty in the sector. We have also begun to deal with the impacts of welfare reform on our

communities, housing providers and housing stock and continue to work to minimise this wherever possible.

This year also saw the development of the Local Enterprise Partnerships and we will be working closely with them in 2013/14 and beyond to ensure that housing is an integral part of local Growth Deals. We also developed 73 rural affordable homes through the new Rural Housing Enabler Network, an innovative business model which employs Rural Housing Enablers across North Yorkshire to work with communities to deliver much needed affordable homes.

We hope to build on this good work and provide more affordable homes and support to our communities through 2013/14.

R Foster

Councillor Richard Foster

Chair of Local Government North Yorkshire and York Housing Board

Contents

Introduction	1
Delivering on our Priorities - 2012/13	4
Strategic Priority 1: Enabling the provision of more affordable homes	4
Strategic Priority 2: Maintaining and improving existing housing stock	8
Strategic Priority 3: Delivering Community Renaissance	8
Strategic Priority 4: Improving access to housing services	9
Strategic Priority 5: Reducing homelessness	11
North Yorkshire Housing and Homelessness Strategy - Key Actions for 2013/14	14

Introduction

North Yorkshire Housing and Homelessness Strategy

Shaped by two rounds of public consultation in March 2009 and January 2010, the North Yorkshire Housing Strategy was subject to a light touch review in Summer 2012 and now includes greater emphasis on homelessness issues and had been renamed the **North Yorkshire Housing and Homelessness Strategy**, which was approved October 2012. Actions were reviewed and updated to reflect the current environment and new challenges, including the introduction of welfare reform.

The strategy sets out North Yorkshire's vision and priorities for housing for the period to 2015 and was a key document in informing the North Yorkshire Local Investment Plan 2011 (North Yorkshire LIP) and the City of York Local Investment Plan 2010 (York LIP).

The vision for the strategy is:

'To make North Yorkshire and York an inclusive place where communities are sustainable and residents can have fair access to decent affordable homes and effective support when they need it.'

Five strategic priorities for North Yorkshire and York are set out in the strategy:

- **Strategic Priority 1:** Enabling the provision of more affordable homes
- **Strategic Priority 2:** Maintaining and improving existing housing stock
- **Strategic Priority 3:** Delivering Community Renaissance
- **Strategic Priority 4:** Improving access to housing services
- **Strategic Priority 5:** Reducing homelessness

The North Yorkshire LIP and the York LIP go on to identify the investment priorities that are required to deliver the ambitions contained within the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

During 2012/13 work was undertaken to refresh the North Yorkshire Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Strategy to create a combined **North Yorkshire Housing and Homelessness Strategy**, which was approved October 2012. Actions were reviewed and updated to reflect the current environment and new challenges, including the introduction of welfare reform.

Delivery against the targets and objectives set out in both the Housing and Homelessness Strategy and the LIPs is reviewed annually by the North Yorkshire and York Sub Regional Housing Board. **This document summarises our progress, performance and key achievements in 2012/13.**

The North Yorkshire Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) Programme

Increasing the provision of rural affordable housing remains a key priority across North Yorkshire and our dedicated team of Rural Housing Enablers (RHEs) have a vital role in working with our rural communities. Hambleton District Council continues to act as lead employer and the North Yorkshire RHE Network manages the programme, reporting directly to the North Yorkshire Housing Board on performance and rural housing matters.



2012/13 was the first year of the new funding model for the Rural Housing Enabler Programme, supported by a wide range of partners to enable the sustainability of the programme. The North Yorkshire model and approach has been widely recognised as national best practice.

In September 2012, the RHE Network delivered a sub regional 'Rural Housing Week' to promote rural affordable housing. The week launched with a conference entitled 'Making it Happen' and also included a wide range of events from member training sessions and landowner workshops to bus tours and scheme openings. There was also a workshop in Ilkley for Bradford Metropolitan District Council (MDC) officers and their partners as part of our work in the wider region. As a consequence, the RHE team will be mentoring Bradford MDC in 2013/14 to help them deliver new rural affordable homes. An action plan was developed from the week which we will be working to in 2013/14.

'Thank you very much for hosting such an interesting and informative event... I found it extremely enjoyable and useful' Associate Director, DTZ Residential



Rural Housing Week - Making it Happen

North Yorkshire Home Choice

North Yorkshire Home Choice is a partnership of local authorities (except Harrogate) and housing associations which aims to give applicants greater flexibility and choice when choosing a property. After running for a year, Home Choice consulted on changes to the scheme in 2012.



The Partnership area has a very high level of housing need, with over 14,000 households waiting for a social rented home (March 2013). The proportion of social rented homes is relatively small, as is the number of homes becoming vacant each year. Housing providers therefore need to gear their policies to give priority to those with the highest needs.

The consultation considered a number of areas in the policy that may need to be revised because:

- firstly, the plan was to review the scheme after it had been up and running for a year
- secondly, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation undertook research to evaluate how Home Choice had worked so far
- thirdly, changes to the Localism Act 2011 allow social landlords to set their own rules about who is eligible to join the register and the types of households that should be given preference, such as foster carers and Armed Forces Personnel for example
- finally, there are a number of reforms to the welfare system starting in 2012/13 which will affect the way in which landlords let and manage affordable homes.

The consultation on the allocations policy was in the form of a survey to members of the public, existing and prospective tenants from 10 September 2012 to 2 November 2012.

The aim of the proposed changes to the scheme is to help North Yorkshire Home Choice deliver its policy aim which is to give priority to those in greatest housing need at a time when the demand for social housing outstrips supply.

The scheme needs to be as fair as possible and the proposed criteria should help to achieve that while providing greater clarity on the allocations process. The proposed changes to the system for new and existing tenants include:

- ensuring local people have priority by restricting the register to people who have a local connection (with the exception of Armed Forces Personnel)
- supporting communities by preventing people with a history of serious Anti-Social Behaviour issues from qualifying for social housing
- excluding homeowners who have no recognised housing need either for economic, physical or social reasons
- introducing a financial threshold for people who have a combined household income and/or capital and assets over £60,000 and who may be able to meet their own housing needs. It is recognised that some people, particularly the elderly, may need to move into specialist accommodation and alternative housing advice will be given to them
- allocating properties to meet applicants' assessed bedroom need to reflect welfare reforms

continued overleaf...

- to make the process fair, penalties to exclude persons from the register have been introduced. These include persons who provide false information, deliberately withhold information or who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances
- the Good Tenant Scheme, an incentive award for secure and assured tenants and formerly known as the Good Neighbour award, has a new allocation assessment.

For more information and full details of the changes to the North Yorkshire Home Choice policy, please visit www.northyorkshirehomechoice.org.uk

North Yorkshire Tenancy Strategy

As a response to The Localism Act, which introduced changes to social housing allocations and tenure reforms, each Local Authority contributed to the development of a North Yorkshire Tenancy Strategy (adopted Jan 2013) and those local authorities who still retain their housing stock also developed more detailed Tenancy Policies for their own homes. This brings North Yorkshire together to help us achieve what are essentially shared common goals. The strategy does not cover Scarborough or York - they have either adopted or are in the process of adopting their own aligning strategies.

The Strategy is a high level framework of shared objectives and principles relating to tenancy issues that seeks to provide more consistency for our delivery partners and customers, while ensuring that local discretion is not removed from our Local Authorities.

A copy of the strategy can be found at:

www.northyorkshirestrategichousingpartnership.co.uk/images/documents/NY_Tenancy_Strategy_Oct_2012.pdf

Delivering on our Priorities - 2012/13

Strategic Priority 1

Enabling the provision of more affordable homes

- ✓ Overall we delivered a total of **536** affordable homes across the sub region
- ✓ **136** of these homes were delivered via the North Yorkshire and City of York Local Investment Plans against a target of 303 homes
- ✓ We successfully delivered a further **243** affordable homes through other means, mainly via planning (Section 106 Agreements)
- ✓ **277** homes were delivered with public subsidy and 259 without

Total number of affordable homes delivered 2012 - 13



Case Study: Archer Close, York

Archer Close is a development of 19 two and three bedroom family homes in the City of York, built to Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Council had identified this site as an ideal opportunity to build much needed new affordable homes in the area, and also to provide a standard bearer for new homes across the city. These are the first new houses built by the council in 25 years.

The houses are clustered in blocks of four, creating a series of mini terraces along the length of the site. The ridge line of each is broken to provide definition within the terrace and the height set to allow space for a third bedroom within the roof void. It was important that the scheme had a unique identity to establish a distinctive piece of architecture which supported its sustainable credentials. A simple palette of materials was established of rustic brick, in keeping with York's housing vernacular, and a black weatherboard cladding, providing a contemporary edge. These materials are complimented with subtle details and flashes of colour to give each house an identity within the terrace.

The scheme was designed in accordance with both Secure by Design and Lifetime Homes guidance, enabling ease of adaptation to suit peoples changing circumstances.



Archer Close, York

Case Study: Blind Lane, Knaresborough, Harrogate District

This development on Blind Lane, Knaresborough, fronting onto Boroughbridge Road, provided 14 homes, including five affordable two and three-bedroom houses. The site previously belonged to Miss Winnifred Jacob Smith, a local philanthropist who, amongst other local good deeds during her lifetime, donated a large piece of land to Harrogate Council to create a new public park in Knaresborough. Her house and its surrounding grounds were sold by her executors for redevelopment, with market houses being provided on the site of the former dwelling and gardens, and affordable homes planned on the former orchard.

Development was delayed when a local resident made an application to North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) for the orchard area to be declared a village green. NYCC did not uphold the application, and the development completed in June 2012, ultimately providing very popular affordable homes for local people.



Blind Lane, Knaresborough

Across North Yorkshire and York a total of **81** homes were also completed on **public Land**, 78 of those being in the City of York and 3 in Scarborough.

Rural Affordable Housing

71 homes were completed through the North Yorkshire Rural Housing Enabler Programme, of which **18** homes were within the National Parks. **44** of the new rural affordable homes were delivered on Rural Exception Sites with the remainder delivered either on 100% affordable housing sites or through Section 106 agreements.



Case Study: West End Avenue, Appleton Roebuck, Selby

Completed in April 2012, the development at West End Avenue, Appleton Roebuck, close to Tadcaster, is in an area of particularly high house prices and the Parish Council were keen to see the development of much needed affordable housing in the area. A parish wide housing needs survey was undertaken in 2007 and a search for suitable sites took place involving the Parish Council, the Rural Housing Enabler and Broadacres Housing Association.

The scheme was enabled through Selby District Council agreeing to the demolition of two of their bungalows at the head of a cul de sac to allow access to land owned by a local farming family. It includes the re-provision of the two bungalows, replacing 1950s one beds with modern 2 bed bungalows, allowing one of the tenants to be rehoused on the same site.

Developed by Broadacres Housing Association, the development is made up of ten homes for rent and shared ownership in a cul-de-sac of:

- 2 x 2 bedroom bungalows
- 4 x 2 bedroom houses
- 4 x 3 bedroom houses

Interest from local people was high. The homes were advertised for local people, and successful households included a young couple purchasing one of the shared ownership units who had previously rented a home owned by the parish council in the village.



West End Avenue, Appleton Roebuck

Delivery via Section 106 or other means

We successfully delivered a further **243** affordable homes through other means, mainly via Planning (Section 106) Agreements as part of mixed tenure developments.

Strategic Priority 2

Maintaining and improving existing housing stock

- ✓ We delivered **1,985** improvements to existing homes
- ✓ We invested almost **£3.5m** in existing homes through Disabled Facilities Grants, Energy Efficiency works and other renewal work

We delivered **1,985** improvements to existing homes through a range of works and spent **£3.5m**.

Type	Number	Spend (£)
*DFGs	526	3.2m
Energy Efficiency	1,427	96,000
Other works	32	190,000
TOTAL	1,985	£3.5m

*Disabled Facilities Grants

Strategic Priority 3

Delivering Community Renaissance

- ✓ Despite the recession, there were site starts at a number of place shaping schemes across the county

Case Study: Elvington, York

A £2 million scheme to build 18 affordable homes on an exception site in Elvington, York is currently being developed by York Housing Association for people with a local connection, and in housing need. The scheme is due for completion in August 2014.

The project on the former Allenby Nursery site had stalled after a previous development partner withdrew. Then, City of York Council got involved to work closely with a local landowner to find a new registered partner to manage the planned affordable housing and so ensure the scheme could go ahead.

The site has planning permission for a mixture of two, three and four bedroom homes with 12 being offered for affordable rents and six for shared ownership to enable local people to get onto the housing ladder. York Housing Association are funding the scheme in conjunction with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The homes will be a welcome addition to the rural affordable housing stock in York.



Housing Plans

Strategic Priority 4

Improving access to housing services

- ✓ 57 homes were completed to Lifetime Homes standards in York
- ✓ North Yorkshire Home Choice was reviewed in 2012
- ✓ Improvements and additions were made to Gypsy and Traveller sites
- ✓ Provision and planning of new Extra Care schemes for older people took place

57 of the new homes completed were developed to Lifetime Home standards. These were 43 homes at the site of the former Discus Bungalows in York and a four person shared housing scheme, which completed at 7th Avenue, in York by York HA for identified clients with learning and some physical disabilities.

Case Study: Tara Park, Malton, Ryedale

Travellers with connections to the Ryedale area are now able to benefit from an expansion and upgrade to Ryedale's only travellers site. The Tara Park site on the outskirts of Malton has been extended to include additional facilities for another seven families. The existing 13 pitches have also been upgraded with new kitchen and bathroom facilities.

Funding for the project has come from the Homes and Communities Agency with support from Ryedale District Council and Yorkshire Housing.

The upgrade and expansion of the Tara Park site meets the needs of Travellers in Ryedale area. The scheme is a good example of effective partnership working making a real difference to local people.



Tara Park, Malton

Case Study: Woodlands Extra Care, Skipton

In June 2013 a £4 million scheme which provided 31 self-contained flats, 23 for rent and 8 for Shared Ownership was delivered in Skipton. Woodlands, a former country house, has been renovated and refurbished, and was the first scheme of its kind to be opened in Craven. The development was designed to meet the needs of frailer older people, over the age of 60, who have significant care requirements.

Woodlands was developed in partnership with the Homes and Community Agency, North Yorkshire County Council, Abbeyfield and Craven District Council. It provides onsite services such as a hairdresser, wellness centre, and an activity room for residents. The scheme enables residents to live as independently as they are able whilst providing onsite care and assistance.



Woodlands Extra Care, Skipton

Strategic Priority 5

Reducing homelessness

The County Homelessness Group monitors the key performance indicators, measuring progress towards achieving the strategic objective. The single Homeless Action Plan continues to develop and a range of projects have been developed and implemented including:

- **Community Champions:** increasing awareness of Rough Sleeping and promotion of the Streetlink helpline
- **Rural Spot Purchase:** Procurement arrangements to “buy in” specialist support for Rough Sleepers
- **Moving Forward:** Tenancy Training resources and training to deliver the programme to clients
- **Personalisation Fund:** Available to support innovative solutions to help Rough Sleepers into accommodation
- **Through the Gate:** Housing advice and support for offenders leaving prison and returning to their home area

5.1 Sustaining and improving homelessness prevention

Key Indicators 2012/13:

- A total of 5,816 households accessed our services
- 428 households were found to be owed a **main housing duty** (homelessness acceptances) during 2012/13 - 9% fewer than in 2011/12
- 2,678 Households were assisted to prevent them from becoming homeless during 2012/2013 - 15% more than in 2011/12

The numbers of homelessness acceptances continue to reduce and preventions are rising year on year. Multi-agency working and partnerships are now commonplace across North Yorkshire, creating efficiencies through shared resources and skills whilst continuing the positive work by Housing Options teams.

The number of people accessing the Housing Options services has increased in most areas across the sub-region. The impacts of welfare reform also continue to adversely affect households in North Yorkshire resulting in an increase in households accessing Housing Options services with increasingly complex issues requiring a multi-agency approach to provide welfare and budgeting advice.

The introduction of the Social Housing Under Occupancy rule in April 2013 resulted in a closer working with Housing Benefit teams to prepare for and raise awareness of welfare reform changes and to allocate Discretionary Housing Payments to meet shared objectives.

5.2 Continue to reduce the use of temporary accommodation and improve quality of the temporary accommodation

Key Indicators 2012/13:

- As at 31 March 2013 there were 171 households in Temporary Accommodation - 3% fewer than as at 31 March 2012
- As at 31 March 2013 there were 37 households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation - 31% fewer than as at 31 March 2013

Our use of Temporary Accommodation has reduced year on year and is the lowest since records were collated in 2004. Whilst this is welcome, the impact, for some local authorities has been additional pressure to retain existing hostels and staffing resources.

Non self-contained accommodation has continued to be used only in Craven and Richmondshire districts. Craven has carried out a Review of Temporary Accommodation and are seeking to enter negotiations with a Registered Provider to develop a new facility on the existing site.

5.3 Sustain and improve progress to tackle youth homelessness

Key Indicators 2012/13:

- There were 13 people aged 16/17 owed a **main housing duty** (homelessness acceptance) due to vulnerability because of their age and/or because they were pregnant, had children or other special reason - 19% fewer than during 2011/12

Introduced in October 2011, the Young Persons Housing Solutions '@ the Hub' initiative became established across the county and further work has been undertaken to develop awareness of the initiative through leaflets and promotional activity.

5.4 Continue to ensure that housing support is available for vulnerable people

Key Indicators 2012/13:

- Planned moves for households moving on from homelessness prevention floating support services is at 94% - an improvement from 92% in 2011/12
- Utilisation of accommodation based services for Richmondshire, Harrogate and Selby was at 69% in 2012/13 compared to 96% in 2011/12

Conclusion

Progress made to reduce homelessness is encouraging, however, this is heavily dependent upon retaining existing resources to deliver the initiatives that have been developed. These are now becoming embedded and the partnership approach to delivery is seeing positive results in terms of reduced numbers of households becoming homeless and required to make a homelessness application.

North Yorkshire Housing and Homelessness Strategy

Key Actions for 2013-14

- Develop the business model for the Rural Housing Enabler Programme to deliver post 2015
- Engage with the North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP to ensure housing and its economic contribution is prioritised
- Work with our partner Housing Associations and the HCA to ensure that the planned new affordable homes are developed as we near the end of the current Homes and Communities Agency funding round and look to the next
- Work with NYCC on the future provision of Extra Care schemes across North Yorkshire
- Carry out further work on developing access to the Private Rented Sector for homeless households
- Review '@ The Hub' services and seek funding to address shortages in services, particularly for high needs supported accommodation
- Carry out a short-term review of homelessness prevention services to ensure that prevention services are able to meet the level of need and demand in the changing economic climate



This document is available in other languages, large print, braille, audio tape or electronic format on request.



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