

2017-2020

Executive Summary Newcastle Housing Statement

January 2017

NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL

1. Introduction:

Our vision for a great city

We are ambitious for Newcastle and the Council. We want to make Newcastle the best place in the UK to be born, to live, to work and to study. We have a proud past, but we want to be equally proud of our future. We are shaping our city today to create a lasting legacy for tomorrow. We work with local people and partners to invest in a future to be proud of. Together we can create the best possible education, job opportunities, health and wellbeing for our citizens.

Newcastle will be known as a fair, innovative and progressive city that is successful and vibrant. The city's prosperity will be shared more fairly, and no-one will be disadvantaged in life simply because of the circumstances of their birth. More equal societies have fewer social problems, better health, greater social cohesion and perform better economically.

Tackling inequalities will be good for all of us. This is why we will focus on making Newcastle a working city – where everyone has the ability to have a well-paid job with good working conditions. And we will create decent neighbourhoods, where people play a bigger role in looking after each other and the environment.

Newcastle will be a great city at the heart of a vibrant region offering an unrivalled setting of coast, countryside and culture. We will play a leading role in creating a strong and prosperous North East, which makes a positive contribution to growing the national economy.

We are a welcoming, compact, and safe city where it is easy to feel at home. We want to build on our existing assets. Our creativity and vibrant cultural sector, world class universities, beautiful green spaces and great public transport all make Newcastle and the North East a great place to live and to do business.

Our vision for the city can only be delivered in partnership. We will work with partners and residents so that together we can fulfil our potential.

The Council Plan 2016 -2017

Purpose of our housing statement

This Housing Statement is one of the Council's key strategic documents. Its purpose is to pull together existing plans and documents and to reference our priorities around the future supply, condition and management of housing and associated services in Newcastle. It highlights how we will make best use of the available resources to meet housing and associated care needs and to support the city's economic growth potential. This statement reflects and supports the major challenges and opportunities in terms of the national and local policy framework and the resources available to deliver our priorities. Despite the challenges we and our partners face we are determined to achieve the priorities set within this statement.

This executive summary is aimed at those who wish to gain an understanding of the key issues facing housing and related services in Newcastle. It provides an overview of our priorities and our pledges as well as the measurable outcomes we will deploy to make good on these pledges.

The full housing statement will be used as background information and to showcase our priorities when bidding for external funding and when commissioning services and service improvement.

Our priorities

Our priorities presented in this statement have been grouped into four key areas:

- A. Make best use of the City's existing housing stock
- B. Delivering new homes to create greater choice
- C. Provide advice, support and information to vulnerable people
- D. Sustainable Economy and Communities

Each of these will now be explored in turn. How we deliver against these priorities can be found at the end of each section, with a clear link to the actions established in the Council Plan 2016 -2017.

Delivering our housing statement & governance

Key pledges within this document will be reviewed and monitored on an annual basis and progress reported to Cabinet.

Bi-annual reports will be brought to Cabinet to seek approval for land disposal and capital receipts to be used as part of our ambitious new build programme. Progress made in providing disabled facilities grants and the number of adaptations will also be reported to Cabinet on a biannual basis as part of the Older Persons Delivery Plan.

Associated Documents

- [Council Plan 2016 -2017](#)
- [Older People's Housing Delivery Plan 2013-2018](#)
- [Newcastle Private Sector Housing Plan 2016-2019](#)
- [The Gateshead and Newcastle Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan 2010-2030](#)
- [YHN Business Strategy 2016-2020](#)
- [Housing Delivery HCA bids](#)
- [Fair Choices in Tough times: Newcastle's Budget 2016](#)
- [Newcastle Homelessness Strategy 2014 -19](#)
- [Adult Services Housing Market Position Statement 2015](#)
- [Safe Newcastle Plan 2015-18](#)

Items such as the number of empty private sector homes brought back into use and the number of disabled facilities grants (DFGs) given will be reported monthly to Directorate Programme Boards as part of the Council's governance process and quarterly to Investment and Development Group.

The number of new homes built, including affordable and specialist housing, and performance monitoring of our HRA housing stock will continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to the appropriate forum.

A. Make best use of the City's existing housing stock

This section outlines the importance of making best use of the existing housing stock in the city, the issues faced and the solutions and actions we plan to undertake.

What we want to achieve:

- Bring empty homes back into use
- Improve standards in the private sector
- Ensure good standards in social housing

What we know

- The Council has set itself an ambition that everyone in Newcastle should have the opportunity to buy or rent a decent home at a price they can afford, in a community where they want to live or work.
- The Council has a statutory duty to meet housing need and the effective use of the existing housing stock is an important component in meeting this need. There are approximately 121,000 dwellings in Newcastle. Of this total, approximately 4,000 homes, mainly in the private sector, are empty at any one time.
- The 2015 Spending Review, Welfare Reform and the Housing Act 2016 have added considerable pressures to the income take from Council house rents. Measures such as: a 1% rent cut for four years from 2016 to 2020, capping social rents to the local housing allowance rate, and the forced sale of higher value Council housing all combine to reduce the amount of rental income coming in, and in turn the amount that can be reinvested in Council housing and related services.
- Existing housing in Newcastle accounts for 33% of the City's carbon emissions. 'Greening' these properties will help us to meet our commitment to be 100% carbon neutral by 2050.

OUR PLEDGE:

We will make best use of our existing housing stock, ensuring it meets the needs and aspirations of current and future residents and that it does not impact negatively on the environment or surrounding area.

To achieve this we will:

- Work with private landlords to improve housing standards and bring empty homes back into use
- Maintain and invest in our housing stock with Your Homes Newcastle
- Support initiatives, such as working with Warm Up North, to deliver energy-saving measures
- Continuing to provide a range of housing options and support that help provide homes people need, including specialist housing options for adults with care needs
- We are committed to doing all that is necessary to make Newcastle carbon neutral by 2050.

Source: The Council Plan 2016-17

How we will know we achieved what we set out to do:

- Fewer private sector empty homes, including long term empties by bringing 300 empty private sector homes back into use.
- Improved standards in the private rented sector through the use of selective licensing, landlord training and enforcement.
- Maximised opportunities to secure external funding to make more homes energy efficient.
- Implementation of the Housing Revenue Account asset plan leading to high satisfaction with the overall condition of homes managed by YHN.
- Use of the Council's newly created Care and Repair Service to explore opportunities to offer complimentary services, such as energy efficiency and health and wellbeing advice, to vulnerable residents who live in the private sector.

B. Delivering new homes to create greater choice

What we want to achieve:

- Build new environmentally sustainable homes for a growing population
- Accelerate the delivery of housing on brownfield sites
- Accelerate the delivery of affordable homes
- Development of specialist housing for older people and those with care and support needs
- Provide attractive housing options to support economic growth and to attract and retain economically active households

What we know

- On the basis of projected population increases and changes in household size in Newcastle there is a need to plan for approximately 16,400 (gross) new homes between 2015 and 2030¹.
- Recent population growth in the City has relied heavily upon a sizeable increase in net inward migration, particularly international migrants and students (with a significant overlap between the two). Over the past two decades the expansion in the number of students in higher education has resulted in a significant demographic shift in many university towns and cities.
- Over the next 5 years the population of the City is forecast to increase by 7,300 to over 300,000.
- The number of people aged 70+ is forecast to increase by 4,000 to 33,000, contributing to an increasing need for level access and supported housing.
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) data shows that Newcastle loses population to North Tyneside each year with fewer coming the other way. Notably, nearly two thirds of this outward migration being people aged 25-44, with children accounting for a further 10%.
- Over the last ten years the affordability ratio of lower quartile income earners in the City in relation to lower quartile house prices (*mean averages*) has risen slightly from 5.13 to 5.42. What this means in laymen terms is that in 2015 an average lower quartile house in the city was 5.42 times the average lower quartile wage compared to 5.13 times a decade earlier². When compared to our near neighbours Gateshead and North Tyneside, Newcastle's affordability ratio of lower quartile incomes against lower quartile house prices is the highest. This means those on lower incomes in Newcastle find it marginally more difficult to afford to buy a house at the lower end of the housing market.
- A significant proportion of people with care needs, especially older people, enter residential care through crisis. We believe that suitable housing options should be available so that individual residents are able to maintain their independence as long as possible.
- A green thread runs through all our policies and services as we aim to make Newcastle one of the greenest cities in Europe. We are committed to doing all that is necessary to make Newcastle carbon neutral by 2050

¹ Planning for the future: Core strategy & Urban Core Plan for Gateshead & Newcastle. 2010-2030. Policy CS10

² www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-housing-market-and-house-prices

OUR PLEDGE:

We will promote lifetime neighbourhoods with a good range and choice of accommodation, services and facilities to meet varied and changing needs.

To achieve this we will:

- Work with developers and the HCA to deliver our Local Development Framework, Core Strategy and Strategic Housing Land Availability plans, building new homes, including affordable housing options, at identified sites throughout the city.
- Continue to provide a range of housing options and support that help provide homes people need, including specialist housing options for children and adults with care and support needs.
- We are committed to doing all that is necessary to make Newcastle carbon neutral by 2050.

Source: Council Plan 2016 -17

How we will know we achieved what we set out to do:

- Facilitated the delivery of at least 1,000 new homes a year, including at least 150 affordable and a range of specialist and supported housing (subject to available funding).
- Via our Land and Asset Plan will have continued to assess sites in council ownership suitable for bringing to the market for mixed use tenure and specialist housing.
- We will submit competitive bids to the HCA, DCLG and DoH for grant and loan funding to support our new build ambitions.
- Will we have continued to monitor the student housing market to ensure the sector provides choice without impacting on other housing markets or neighbourhoods.
- We will have continued to monitor and seek feedback from residents of new build specialist housing to ensure quality assurance of the design, layout of buildings and community facilities and feed this into future supported housing programmes.
- Made significant headway in our Green agenda via planning for more energy efficient buildings and heat networks.

C. Provide advice, support and information to vulnerable people

This section outlines the support offered to vulnerable people in Newcastle so that no one is disadvantaged or left behind on the grounds of financial exclusion, illness, age, mental health or impairment.

What we want to achieve:

- Homelessness prevention
- Helping people to maintain their independence
- Safeguarding vulnerable people

What we know

- The supported housing market in Newcastle meets a variety of needs including people with long and short term needs.
- The Care Act 2014 is the key driver for change in Adult Social care.
- In Newcastle the number of people sleeping rough has increased by 38% from March 2015 to April 2016, and 42 out of 44 new rough sleepers were from outside the area.
- A single case homelessness application is estimated to cost £2,656 and a single case of rough sleeping costs £8,391, which increases to £20,000 if the costs to criminal justice and health are included.
- Due to the current financial climate means we need to consider what we do and how we do it.
- Every £1 spent on providing housing support for vulnerable people can save £2 in reduced costs of health services, tenancy failure, crime and residential care.
- In 2015/16 there were 6,581 incidents involving 5,056 victims of domestic violence or abuse reported to Northumbria Police; demonstrating a high level of repeat victims (2,355 or 47% of the total number of victims).
- A number of households in the city choose not to or do not qualify for social housing. For these people the private rented sector remains the only viable option. For this reason the Council offers assistance to private rented tenants to access, manage and sustain their tenancy.
- Government has launched consultation on how supported housing will be funded in the future, bringing with it new challenges to local government and other care providers.

OUR PLEDGE:

We will continue to support the most vulnerable and dis-advantaged members of the community through a range of information, advice and direct support.

To achieve this we will:

- Co-ordinate information, advice and support to promote social and financial inclusion and prevent homelessness through Active Inclusion Newcastle, Housing Advice Centre, Financial Inclusion Group and Homelessness Prevention Forum.
- Offering crisis support for those that need it, including emergency housing and support.
- Target support through our Welfare Rights Service and helping people to claim the benefits they are entitled, mitigating the impact of welfare reform.
- Invest in services for older people, people with disabilities and mental health conditions that improve quality of life, for example, supporting community based activities that reduce isolation, as well as providing adaptations to allow them to live independently in a home of their choice
- Work with partners in the health service to plan the most effective use of health and social care resources to best effect and review and remodel our adult social care workforce.
- Develop an integrated approach to providing care and support for adults with needs arising from life changing events and continuing care and support for those with long term, complex or multiple needs.
- Expand Shared Lives placements, linking people with learning disabilities to carers who can support them to develop new skills and live independently.

Source: Council Plan 2016 -17

How we will know we achieved what we set out to do:

- Vulnerable people are safeguarded and are safe and secure.
- The number of people homeless or sleeping rough will not increase.
- More people will have claimed the benefits they are entitled to.
- There will be sufficient supported housing options for people with care needs.
- Our Adult Social Care Services will reduce and delay the need for people to require care and support services.
- Those who do require care and support services will have a positive experience and improved quality of life.
- The new inclusive Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (NIDAS) will be available for all those who need it.
- We will have continued to monitor and seek feedback from residents of new build specialist housing to ensure quality assurance of the design, layout of buildings and community facilities and feed this into future supported housing programmes.
- Continue with the rent deposit scheme or recognised alternative to assist low income households access into good quality well managed affordable private rented housing.
- We will have responded to government consultation on supported housing funding and assessed the impacts to vulnerable people, changes to council expenditure, and to our care provider partners.

D. Sustainable Economy and Sustainable Communities

This section shows how we will use our activity, resources and innovation to bring about additional housing and employment and training opportunities.

What we want to achieve:

- Use our resources and capital to deliver mixed use housing
- Use our new build and construction activity to help people into employment and training as well as to create and sustain jobs in the supply chain
- Increased tenant and resident satisfaction with the home and neighbourhood
- Continue to explore opportunities to create additional income for the Council through new physical developments and services

What we know

- Home building generates substantial local economic activity, including new income and jobs for residents, and additional revenue for local and national government. Nationally the housebuilding industry delivers an estimated economic footprint of £19.2bn per year for the UK economy, and provides 600,000 jobs and generates £1.4bn in tax revenue³.
- Newcastle's economy is growing stronger and the Council is helping by investing in the infrastructure and assets that create the right conditions for businesses to grow.
- We are helping local people to benefit from new job opportunities and building the homes that a growing population needs, resulting in increased revenues from New Homes Bonus and Council Tax
- We know that feeling safe and being safe are important to local residents and communities and key to attracting investment

³ The Economic Footprint of UK House Building. NLP. March 2015

OUR PLEDGE:

We will use our activity and resources and innovation to bring about additional housing and employment and training opportunities

To achieve this we will:

- Help people who have been unemployed for a long time to develop skills and confidence to get back in to work
- Managing our resources responsibly and prudently by being efficient and maximising income.
- Work with private landlords to improve housing standards and bring empty homes back into use
- Maintain and invest in our housing stock with Your Homes Newcastle
- Working closely with Northumbria Police and other bodies through the Safe Newcastle Partnership to reduce crime and the impact of anti-social behaviour.

Source: Council Plan 2016 -17

How we will know we achieved what we set out to do:

- Levels of inward investment will increase and contribute to more jobs and the pipeline of investment prospects will grow.
- Our new build and construction initiatives will help more people into work or training opportunities (subject to contractual agreements).
- A reduced number of empty homes creating more cohesive and sustainable communities.
- Maintain a high tenant satisfaction level with the overall housing services provided by YHN.
- We will see reductions in the gap between the most and least affected neighbourhoods for 'All Crime'.
- We will see reductions in the gap between the most and least affected neighbourhoods for anti-social behaviour.
- 51 (85%) people in the YHN employability programme move onto education, employment or training.

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