

Cabinet Member for Homes & Safer Communities report to ECDOSC, 12 November 2014.

The work in the Housing Department continues in a climate that is challenging due to benefit changes, lower incomes and rising cost of living.

Work undertaken in the directorate is linked to the Council's priorities to:

- Create jobs and grow the economy
- Get York moving
- Build strong communities
- Protect vulnerable people
- Protect the environment

However with national budgetary constraints continuing funding from Government grants has reduced which in turn will hamper what we would like to do.

As I continue to say at every available opportunity *'An affordable, decent quality and warm home is key to residents' health and wellbeing and to children's educational attainment'....* and as previous said I will continue to say until every resident of the City has the choice of a decent home. Whilst we have a better than average housing stock, across tenures, we must not become complacent. Whilst some believe that residents should move away, because of York's housing costs and lack of supply, my view is that this is morally unacceptable.

The Housing duties of the Council are many and varied and centres not only around our stock but partnership working and increasingly with regard to the Private Rented Sector (PRS) as this grows year on year – it is our duty to ensure that residents live in safe and sound homes.

However the politics of housing are becoming increasingly polarized through the stigmatization of those who live in social and private rent. When those involved in development sectors and politicians claim that social housing devalues market rent and purchase then we should rightly defend the work that the Council and Housing Associations do to ensure an ever increasing section of the population is homed.

Choice Based Letting scheme - The partnership is made up of:

- City of York Council
- Craven District Council
- Hambleton District Council
- Richmondshire district Council

- Ryedale District Council
- Scarborough Borough Council
- Selby District Council
- Broadacres Housing Association
- Yorkshire Coast Homes
- Yorkshire Housing

Vacant properties are advertised on the website www.northyorkshirehomechoice.org.uk and in a weekly property sheet that you can pick up throughout the county.

Residents can bid for properties if they have registered on the Common Housing Register. When the advertising cycle for a property closes bids are sorted in order of their priority and the property is then offered to the first eligible person with the highest priority that appears at the top of the shortlist. Details of recent bids are published openly so that those bidding can compare their position against those that were successful in qualifying for the properties.

There are often queries, from those on the 'List' and Councillors, why residents are in particular categories. I thought it may be of interest for members, and for those who read this report, to understand the system. Below I have reproduced sections from the guide:

Emergency band

- *Applicants unable to return to their home from hospital because their current home is permanently unsuitable. We will need a letter from the hospitals senior social worker or relevant senior consultant to confirm this.*
 - *Applicants unable to access key facilities in their home without major adaptation works*
- Only applicants with a local connection to the partnership area will be considered for the emergency band.*

Gold band

- *Care leavers, with an agreed support package*
- *Applicants who need to move on from an approved accommodation based supported housing scheme*
- *Under occupiers of a Local Authority or Housing Association property in the partnership area who want to move to a property with at least two fewer bedrooms.*
- *Applicants who are statutory homeless or at risk of homelessness and in priority need*
- *Applicants who are overcrowded and require two or more bedrooms*

- Applicants with a serious and enduring illness whose health and/or wellbeing is significantly compromised by their home or environment
- Applicants who need to move to relieve a proven hardship

Silver Band

- Applicants who have a health or wellbeing issue, which will be removed or improved by moving

Bronze band - All other applicants.

Good Tenant Scheme formally Good Neighbour - This is an incentive scheme for tenants for partner's landlords who have not in the past 3 years breached any of their tenancy conditions and have a clear rent account. They will be awarded one band higher than their assessed housing need to a maximum of gold band

To qualify, your home must be in a good state of repair and decoration and suitable for re-letting without additional work (over and above the relevant safety checks) and you must agree to allow your landlord to show other applicants around the property before you move out.

For further and more detailed information I have included the web links to the HomeChoice Scheme Guide and Housing Allocation Policy

http://www.york.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/993/north_yorkshire_homechoice_scheme_guide

http://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/977/north_yorkshire_housing_allocation_policy

Waiting List - Last year all members of the scheme took part in a refresh of applications which resulted in anyone who did reply being removed from the list, many others due to changes in circumstances also were removed from the list. The current Waiting List position at year end and Q2 end is:

Register by LA & Band @ 01.10.14					
	Emergency	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total of Band
Craven	0	28	168	340	536
Hambleton	6	70	319	482	877
Richmondshire	0	44	173	201	418
Ryedale	0	55	272	338	665
Scarborough	2	232	581	1102	1917
Selby	2	38	249	277	566
York	2	178	763	404	1348
Total of Local Authority	12	645	2525	3144	6327

There have been significant reductions in the numbers across the region, since the allocation policy changes have been implemented. As I reported last year this was expected due the changes which included:

- Ensuring local people have priority by restricting the register to people who have a local connection
- Supporting balanced and sustainable 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 or social reasons
- Introducing a financial threshold for people who have a combined household income and/or capital and assets of £60,000 plus and who may be able to meet their own housing needs. It is recognised some people, in particular 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 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 changes, as I noted last year, have significantly reduced the numbers in the Bronze Band. During consultation many applicants in Bronze Band reported that the previous policy gave people unrealistic expectation of any chance of being allocated a home. There is then a view that has been discussed across the region that whilst numbers are down there is no actual reduction in need as many simply do not register or re-register due to believing there is no possibility of obtaining a home.

With regard to those who are now excluded who own a home. I have had some casework involving such situations where people cannot afford their home due to change in employment – lower incomes – that their debt outweighs any equity or due to relationship breakdown. If mortgage rates do raise this maybe an area we see more people coming forward from.

Changes to Council Homes rent payment - From April 2014 tenants have been paying their rent in advance. This includes when signing a tenancy agreement for a new Council home - this applies to new tenants and existing tenants who want to move home. A helpful factsheet can be viewed here:

http://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/12812/r1_get_rent_ready_factsheet

Homeless applications 14/15 45 presentations & 23 acceptances. 69 in temp (13/14 57 presentations, 31 accepted 90 in temporary)

Arrears – City of York Council has not yet completed the latest arrears report (up to the 5th Oct) last reporting period headline figures were:

- Current arrears £771,812 (£911,943 at the same point last year)
- Former arrears £309,496 (£342,185 last year)

The Council has the lowest rent arrears for 12 years due to the work being undertaken to engage with our tenants. This is a major achievement considering the affect of the Bedroom Tax

Voids - The next voids report (lets up to 5th Oct) will not be produced for a couple of weeks. The latest figures (cumulative figures to 24 August). Total number of lets: 237

Re-let time: 25.92 days
 Number of secure lets: 178
 Re-let time (secure): 26.44 days
 Number of mutual exchanges: 77

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) accessed – As I reported last year the changes to benefits saw a 350% increase in DHP applications compared to same period (Mar-Sep) in 12/13. Below includes the full year 13/14 and this year up to 30/09/14:

	Apps made	Apps paid
12/13	268	201
13/14	876	587
14/15 (to 30/9/14)	425	350

Bedroom Tax – this cruel tax continues to affect a large percentage of vulnerable residents. Council Officers continue to provide support and help for those struggling. It is particularly worrying to note the number affected with dependents and it should not be forgotten that many on Housing Benefit in the City are in work but due to low pay levels and an increase in part-time work, especially for women, benefits are needed to not up income.

Actual 310314	RSLs	CYC	Combined
	No.	No.	Total
Total Housing Benefit caseload	3,023	5,063	8,086
No. Affected by Bedroom Tax	345	586	931
% caseload affected	11.4%	11.6%	11.5%
No. Affected by Bedroom Tax with dependants	123	212	335
Lone parent	92	147	239
1 bedroom excess	308	487	795
2+ bedroom excess	37	99	136

Est. av. Loss per wk	£15.31	£14.60	£14.86
for 1 bedroom excess	£14.05	£12.88	£13.33
for 2+ bedroom excess	£26.08	£23.13	£23.92
Total annual loss	£273,934	£409,894	£683,828
No. on IS or equiv.	184	339	523
No. non-IS	161	247	408

Adaptations

- 67 disabled facilities grants completed so far to help residents
- 60 major adaptations completed in council homes for council tenants
- 718 minor adaptations installed across all tenures e.g. grab rails/banister rails and half steps
- 100% of customers stated that they this has enabled them to remain in their homes and improved the quality of their life

Additional Grant funding received

- £20K additional Disabled Facilities Grant funding received above normal allocation in 2013/14 and helped two ex-servicemen obtain adaptations

Capital Works Programme 2013/14 & 2014/15 – there have been a number of political attacks on how the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is spent. As there seems not to be an understanding of the repair and maintenance costs of our homes I thought that this report would give an opportunity to explain.

As a responsible landlord it is important that our stock is kept to a high standard, that homes are insulated, at consistently high levels, to help reduce energy costs and that they are safe and of a standard we would all wish to live in. The HRA Business Plan which was approved in September 2014 sets out that over the next 5 years £74.5m will be spent on responsive repairs / maintenance and improvements to the Council's housing stock.

Whole City stock reports have constantly found that the poorest housing stock in the City is in the private sector – Private Rented Sector (PRS) and owner Occupier. As a responsible landlord we can set an example and our Tenants Choice Scheme is valued by our tenants. There should never be a situation where renting in the social housing sector means poor quality and standards

Capital Works Done 13/14	No of Homes
Doors fitted on external painting & repairs	78
External Painting Programme	1022
Heating Referrals - Npower	410
Loft Conversions	7
Roofing	60
Sound proofing	67
Tenants Choice - Main Programme	218
Tenants Choice - Rewires Only	33
Tenants Choice - Voids by Forrest	48
Window Replacements	700

Capital Works 14/15	Planned No of Homes	as at 28/10/14 completed
Airey Houses - non traditional	16	0
Doors fitted on external painting & repairs	30	19
External Painting Programme	1200	1180
Heating Referrals - Npower	400	168
Loft Conversions	16	10
Roofing	60	0
Soundproofing	60	14
Tenants Choice - Main Programme	230	218
Tenants Choice - Voids by Forrest/Gentoo		25
Window Replacements	300	187

I can also report that the window programme will be finished this financial year, meaning that this has been completed within four years from a situation of no forward planned budget except for year one under the previous administration. This has been a huge undertaking but was one that I have driven to come in on time due to the importance of our homes having an increased SAP rating (Standard Assessment Procedure) and helping towards saving our tenants money.

Ongoing loft and cavity wall insulation work - From August 2013 to June 2014 the City of York Council worked in partnership with Cosyseal. Cosyseal carried out surveys on all our council homes to check whether current loft and cavity wall insulation levels were adequate. If the insulation is found to be inadequate, Cosyseal carried out works to improve insulation levels.

Gardening Service - The Garden Maintenance contract provides a grass and hedge cutting service for elderly and disabled customers living in Council accommodation who are unable or have no family to maintain their garden. Oakdale NE Ltd were awarded the contract in the early summer.

Unfortunately their early work involved a lot of 'catching up' due to difficulty with the previous contract. However the feed back from residents has been excellent with many saying how good Oakdale's staff are and the quality of their work. We have had feedback from 33% of the 413 Garden Assistance customers, with an average performance rating of 9.22 out of 10.

Next year, as part of the new contract, grass cuts will be increased from 5 to 7 and hedge cuts increased from 2 to 3. This decision was taken following on from customer feedback.

Housing & Building Services Customer Service Excellence Award –
I am delighted to report that the whole Housing and Building Services Teams have received this recognition and would thank them for their hard work which has been recognised through this award. The team received this award after inspection in September 2014 which certifies the service as giving customer service excellence to its housing clients.

The assessment team spoke to myself, Council Officers, representatives of the Residents Associations and Federation and partners.

The independent service review reveals that the Council's Housing and Building Services team has achieved the Government Standard for Customer Service Excellence which is in line with the 2013/14 Tenant and Leaseholder Annual Report which shows a nearly 90% overall satisfaction rate, and which the assessment acknowledged.

The assessment noted the team's commitment to help the harder-to-reach and vulnerable customers and delivering improved services to them. The report noted that Council Officers have good insight into the needs of different groups and also how they continually build on that knowledge.

The assessors reported that the Council provided a seamless service for highly vulnerable younger residents who come to the team for support and through the help offered are able to manage their own tenancy, as well as exceptional partner working such as with the Citizens' Advice Bureau and contractors.

Below comments are from the report back

Housing Services deliver services to a wide range of customers. They have over 7,000 tenancies; provide specialist support for older persons and young people as well as having a wide remit for improving private sector provision. They have developed positive working relationships with private sector landlords and established their own lettings agencies for private sector tenancies.

They also have responsibility for managing statutory homelessness through the Housing Options service. Staff deliver front line services through estate management and delivery of an 'in-house' Building Services repair and maintenance team as well as working in partnership to deliver improvements to ensure 'Decent Homes Standards' are maintained. Highlights from the Assessment include the good overall satisfaction which is within top quartile, the commitment to helping the harder to reach and vulnerable and delivering improved services for them, the work achieved within the private sector, partnership links with CAB and building contractors which clearly adds value to customers and the seamless service for the vulnerable younger persons who come to you with chaotic lifestyles and who emerge in maintaining sustainable tenancies.

The culture of the organisation from local politicians, through management structure to front line employees is very open with staff feeling able to talk openly to managers about improving and developing the services.

Cllr Tracey Simpson-Laing Nov 2014

Particularly of note was the customer focus shown by front line Building Operatives and the high levels of satisfaction they achieved from customers whilst in their homes.

The Glebe - The Glebe has been selected as a winner of one of the 34 Awards in the *National Housing for Older People Awards 2014*. I would like to thank all staff involved in the running and management of The Glebe and to those residents who voted for their accommodation.

The awards were voted on by 3288 residents of 257 retirement, sheltered and extra care housing using the EAC (*Elderly Accommodation Counsel*) card game designed to stimulate discussions and help capture satisfaction ratings on design, services, and well-being. Nominations from all forms of housing for later life were received between 1st October 2013 and 15th September 2014. For further information I have provided links to the awards and the EAC card game.

<http://www.housingcare.org/providers/housing-for-older-people-awards-2014.aspx>

<http://www.housingcare.org/providers/eac-resident-consultation.aspx>

Tenant and Leaseholder annual report 2013/14 Once again a huge thank you to all those residents who took part in this year's survey. As ever some really useful information came forward and has helped shape improvements to the Housing Departments work which led to the Housing Services Customer Service Excellence Award. The following link leads to the report:

http://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/15432/tenant_and_leasehold_annual_report_201314

Council House building programme - is on target.

Beckfield Lane - Work on Beckfield Lane is under way and is on target for completion, in February 2015, providing 18 new council homes and 9 family houses for market sale. The scheme is being built by Gentoo, and Hudson Moody estate agents is marketing the sale houses, of which I can say four, have already been reserved off plan. 9 of the 18 council homes will be apartments, aimed at over-55s who are down-sizing from larger family houses. The sale value obtained from Hudson Moody is very positive and goes against those who said no one would want to buy them. The 2-bed are to be marketed at £185k and the 3 bed £225k.

The profits from these sales will be returned to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to fund further builds.

- **The Pack of Cards**, Linsey Avenue has been demolished and the site cleared so that work can begin.
- **White Swan**, Piccadilly handover is scheduled for December 2014.

Planning permission has been granted for Fenwick Street, Hewley Avenue, Chaloners Road and Newbury Avenue.

Help to Buy in York: Latest data – There has been much publicity around the *Help to Buy Scheme* and whether it is actually helping the people it should. The Equity loans are open to both first-time buyers and home movers on new-build homes in England with a purchase price up to £600,000 – the question from across politics is whether this figure should be reduced. Purchases cannot sub-let their homes.

How the scheme works -with an equity loan:

- *you'll need to contribute at least 5% of the property price as a deposit*
- *the government will give you a loan for up to 20% of the price*
- *you'll need a mortgage of up to 75% to cover the rest*

Below are the figures for York:

- Help to Buy 1: Equity loan. Covering period 1 April 2013 (start of programme) to 30 June 2014. Total loans in York = 60 with combined loan value of £2,369,357.
- Help to Buy 2: Mortgage guarantee: Total homes purchased under the scheme in York = 23 (up to March 2014 - latest figures available). Combined value of guarantees = £3,524,167
- This shows assistance to new home owners in York totalling almost £6m since April 2013.

Whilst this shows some help it is unclear who is being helped, due to the product being used for up to such a high value. It is also hard to compare with other areas as loans depend on development activity, build out rates and timing and so there is appearing a very wide variation in take up across the country. For further information on the scheme I have provided the links below:

<http://www.helptobuy.org.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/affordable-home-ownership-schemes/help-to-buy-equity-loans>

Housing Week 2014 - City of York Council's third Housing Week is running from 3-7 November 2014. This year it will be focusing on the increasing need for more and better housing solutions in York. To achieve this residents, tenants, professionals and academics will come together to further improve the city's housing and associated service

The theme of the Housing Summit on Friday 7th November will be on the part housing has to play on people's health and workshops will address living longer, or with dementia, or independently. Keynote speakers will be John Kennedy from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation discussing research into loneliness and Professor Rebecca Tunstall of the University of York who will talk about research into the links between housing and health. There will also be the first screening of a DVD produced by young people from the council's Howe Hill Hostel who have experienced homelessness.

Events during the week will include:

Media site visits to

- the nine apartments nearing completion at Beckfield Lane. This scheme is aimed at tenants aged over 55 and a recent promotional event aimed at downsizers attracted some 30 expressions of interest.
- the development by Yorkshire Housing near Hob Moor where 41 properties will be available for affordable or social rent, managed by Yorkshire Housing, and 15 properties will be available through the government's Help to Buy scheme.
- 18 affordable city centre homes where the redevelopment has been supported by City of York Council to help regenerate an unused city centre building.

Other events will cover:

- **Older peoples' housing options** - To encourage people to consider and plan their housing options in later life, during the week there will be a series of open days at sheltered accommodation schemes across the city.
- **Homelessness** - City of York Council is launching a new homelessness prevention initiative. As part of it, key agencies will create tailor-made support packages for long-term rough sleepers to support them to get the accommodation and support services they need.

- **Landlord events** - The first ever Student Good Landlord Awards to be made in York will be announced on Tuesday 4 November. City of York Council's YorProperty letting agency is sponsoring the Outstanding Service Award.

Also running throughout the Week is a Council consultation with York's private rented sector to see if the Council is undertaking the right actions to support landlord and tenants now and in the future.

- **Social care connection** - An invitation-only event will bring Adult Social Care professionals together to discuss the future of housing-related support for the most vulnerable residents. While children's service specialists will converge for the annual No Wrong Door conference which brings partners together to help make York a great place in which to live and grow up.
- **Tenants' and residents' events** - Last year's social rented housing swap shop was a great success. Tenants of any registered social landlord are invited to drop in to West Offices on 6 November from 9am-1pm to the 'Your Home, the Right Size' event.
- All the Council's newest tenants have been invited to join residents to brush up their DIY skills. Free sessions will be offered by the Bell Group at a couple of properties in the city to help inspire and up-skill people with looking after their home. Besides stripping then hanging wallpaper, preparing woodwork and basic painting, participants are in with a chance to win a £50 decorating voucher.
- Residents who want to be more active for their own community's benefit are invited to a workshop. There, everything from setting up a community group to running events or activities will be shared to help more people make more of a difference in their neighbourhood.

Empty Homes – the Officer dedicated to working on the City's empty homes brought forward our first CPO on a property in Bradley Drive. This was an action that the Council felt necessary to take after years of inaction and the Council not having relevant policies to bring the house back in to use

Interestingly, the owners of the other properties which are on our radar as being suitable for CPO action, have since the publicity, regarding 9 Bradley Drive, been more proactive about their properties.

However Officers are ensuring that where an owner has agreed certain actions that they are keeping to that agreed programme and will take action if they do not.

Statistics

- 103 Empty Homes were brought back in to use at the end of 2013/14 including our first ever CPO
- Long Term Empties in 2013 were 194. Of these 141 had been empty 6mths-2yrs. Further work on the 141 received replies from 106 owners who confirmed the properties as being empty (no response from 35) with 72 giving reasons. These included:
 - 31 (43%) were undergoing renovation/development (or due to start in the near future)
 - 21 (29%) were sold/let and awaiting occupation
 - 18 (25%) were being marketed for sale/let
 - 2 (3%) were empty because of access/lease issues (city centre shops)

Housing Accreditation in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) – As I outlined last year YorProperty is a voluntary accreditation scheme for private landlords and agents, which recognises and promotes good quality, well-managed private sector accommodation. It is aimed at all private rented dwellings, whether the property is licensed under the Housing Act 2004 or not. It provides recognition to landlords and agents who take a responsible approach to letting their properties and helps promote them. It helps tenants by identifying properties which meet the standards set out in the Scheme. The scheme does this by setting out minimum safety, contractual and service delivery standards that tenants can expect when they rent accommodation. These standards are clear, understandable and readily achievable.

The Scheme has been developed in consultation with, and is supported by, City of York Council, the University of York, York St. John University and individual landlords and letting agents.

Accreditation status will be given to landlords and agents of properties which meet the following requirements:-

- The landlord or agent is a fit and proper person and complies with the Scheme's Code of Management Practice.
- The landlord or agent has attended training organised in conjunction with the Scheme or by a recognised organisation.

- The property is free of all Category 1 and high scoring Category 2 hazards as identified under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- Gas Safety certificates and Energy Performance information and other safety certificates are provided as required.
- The property has an adequate means of escape and detection in case of fire.
- The property meets the physical standards set out in the Scheme.

The successful introduction of the YorProperty Accreditation scheme has so far led to 100 landlords/letting agents accredited with a portfolio of 420 properties. YorProperty letting agency is sponsoring the Outstanding Service Award at the first ever Student Good Landlord Awards on 4th November part of Housing Week

YorProperty is currently seeking the views of tenants, landlords, letting agents, the wider community and stakeholders in the PRS, to help City of York Council to see whether it is taking the right actions to support the sector and to decide what could be done in the future. Consultation finishes on midday, 21 November. Following the consultation we will be reviewing the responses from all parties to consider the next steps.

Arclight – In December I spent a very interesting 2 hours at Arclight to have an update on the work they are doing and to further understand who is coming in for support. It was very good to hear that Arclight were planning to provide a support worker to the Hospital – and in particular A & E – as often Homeless people are either discharged with no address to go to or are kept in beds when there is no need for them. The Support Worker will work with Homeless agencies in the City to ensure that no one is discharged without an address to go to. When I undertook a night in A & E a few months later it was good to hear from Hospital staff how they found this service useful

Housing Design types - Whilst it is clear that we need new homes for York residents, traditional build is a slow process and will not deliver at the speed need. Because of this I have for the last few years been looking at alternative designs. I have now visited a number of units to look at the standards and designs and have been speaking with officers about how these can provide much needed homes in the City.

Gypsies Roma and Travellers – As members will be aware the expansion of Osbaldwick, six new pitches, was agreed at planning in October 2013.

The release of match funding – to the Homes & Community Agency funds – was agreed by Cabinet on the 5th November 2013.

I would like to express my concern over what appears to be an orchestrated campaign to stop the Osbaldwick site expansion going ahead and to the need for future provision.

Firstly, in the House, the MP for York Outer asked Brandon Lewis MP about the location of Gypsies Roma and Travellers sites. In his reply the Minister answered that there needed to be, in 'Planning Law', a change to the definition of Travellers and those who did not travel should be deemed to have their needs met by other means than sites – that is housing. This follows on from comments by the MP for York Outer that sites are not needed as people can live in houses.

In a live interview on Radio York I informed the MP for York Outer he was 'politicking', that his own Secretary of State had not called the planning permission for Osbaldwick 'in' and that his own Government, through the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), were funding it. I also asked whether he thought that he, the Minister or the Government believe they had powers over International or European law – the rights and definitions of the groups are defined in International and European Law.

I am also aware that questions were raised with the HCA to whether they thought the funding of Osbaldwick was 'the right thing'. It is concerning to note that at such a late stage this 'question' was raised as if funding had been withdrawn. It would have led to a breach of agreement with regards to contracts.

To try and manage and mend the negative impact that some politicians have continued to pursue in the City I have met on a number of occasions with the Travellers Trust to ensure that there is an understanding that as a Council we recognise our legal duty, but also our moral duty, to ensure the housing of one of our oldest yet most vulnerable communities. I am currently speaking with media outlets and City partners about the continued perceived harassment and the affect this can have on children's access to education and the health outcome of women.

Howe Hill – I had a really fantastic visit to Howe Hill to mark its second anniversary as a dedicated Young Persons Foyer – time flies quickly. I was very humbled to meet so many fantastic young people who have been helped and had their life turned around by the services.

The stats for the last two years show a 100% success rate for move on and education and this is all down to the great support offered by the service. The story was picked up by *Inside Housing*.

National Consultations - CYC Housing Services has led on the following national consultations and calls for evidence during 2013-14:

- Statutory guidance on housing allocations (Nov 2013)
- Lyons housing review (Feb 2014)
- Natalie Elphick review into the role of local authorities in future housing supply (May 2014)
- Transparency in HRA asset values (Aug 2014)
- Universal Credit data sharing with social landlords (Aug 2014)
- National fuel poverty strategy (Sept 2014)

These responses have ensured City of York Council maintains its national profile and is fully engaged in influencing/shaping national policy.

Invitations to speak at Conference - In June I was asked to speak, and be on a discussion panel, at the ***Westminster Social Policy Forum Keynote Seminar: The future for affordable rent and social housing***, on the future supply of Affordable Housing with Lord Richard Best

Attended:

- Older Person Housing Launch with Minister for Housing Kris Hopkins – Nov 2013
- Leeds City Region HCA (Leeds) – Oct 2013, Jan, March, June,
- York & North Yorks Strategic Housing Forum – Nov 2013, March, Sept 2014
- Local Government Yorks & Humber Improvement and European Board (Wakefield) – Jan, April, July 2014
- Residents Federation – various months 2013-2014
- Resident Federation Training Day – Jan 14
- Peasholme – Nov 2013, September 2014
- Home Grown Awards – Oct 2013
- Social Enterprise Yorkshire & Humber – Opening speaker
- Student Community Partnership – April 2014
- Portakabin – Dec 2013, Feb 2014
- YMCA Wimbledon – Jan 2014
- Strategic Gypsy Roma & Traveller Board
- Cabinet Office & NESTA, Social Action Summit, London – June 2014

- City Growth Commission – June 2014
- Your Climate Yorkshire & Humber (Climate UK) Infrastructure Board – September, November 2014

Media Interviews

- Inside Housing interview
- Inside Housing Blog for Housing Week
- Radio York – Housing Week / CPO / Older Persons Housing Launch / Bedroom Tax/ Traveller site provision
- Minster FM – Homelessness / Housing Week / Older Person Housing Launch/ Howe Hill

Interviews

- Department of Health interview on Long Term Health & Housing – Dec 2013
- DCLG National Survey interview on attitudes to Gypsy Roma & Travellers Dec 2013
- Dr Friederike Ziegler York University *Mobility in Later Life* interview – Feb 2014
- Simon Town interview re JRF – Jan 2014
- David Pencheon (Director) Sustainable Development Unit -NHS England/Public Health England on Climate Change and links to Health & Housing – March 2014

Meetings

- York High & Millthorpe Deputy Heads meeting– changes to Housing and Welfare Nov 2013
- Jeremy Jones Arclight - Dec 2013
- Jack Dromey MP Shadow Housing Minister – Nov 2013
- Emma Reynolds MP Shadow Housing Minister – March 2014
- Julia Histon York Housing Association – Nov 2013
- Julia Histon & Kevin McAleese, York Housing Ass – Sept 2014
- Shelter & IPPR meeting on housing – Jan 2014
- YMCA Wimbledon – Jan 2014
- Hilary Benn MP – Feb 2014
- Northern Housing Consortium – Feb 2014
- Native Hemp Homes- Jan & August 2014
- York Travellers Trust – April, July and September 2014
- Tony Manning, Veterans Housing – Nov 2014

Chaired:

- 'Under the Weather' Department of Health/Public Health England/ Environment Agency. Event Chair – Feb 2014

Speaking events

- Housing Week – Oct 2013 & Nov 2014
- Westminster Social Policy Forum, London – June 2014
- Treasury Department - Redesigning and Sustaining Local Public Services: What works, the challenges and overcoming the barriers – June 2014
- Your Climate Adaptation Network, Wakefield – July 2014