

Annex A – Housing stock context

Housing overview – September 2011:

- There are around 85,243 dwellings in York, the vast majority in the private sector.
- Just over 12,300 homes are owned by the council and housing associations and classed as affordable rented properties.
- The proportion of social rented homes in York is low compared to many other areas at just 14%.
- There are also around 500 homes in York that have been purchased under low cost home ownership initiatives such as discounted sale and shared ownership.
- There are 2,880 households currently on the housing register waiting for a social rented home.

When last measured in 2008, we found there are almost 13,000 private rented homes. The sector is largely geared towards the professional and student markets and lower income households can often find access difficult. We anticipate planned changes to local housing allowance (i.e. reduced rates) could make things worse. The average price of a private rented property is around £187.00 per week compared to a council average rent of £63.00 per week.

The sector has grown over the past five years as high house prices and lack of mortgage finance has shut many out of home ownership. We expect this growth to continue so working with landlords to ensure high standards across the sector must be a priority. There is growing scope for 'intermediate' tenure options such as 'shared ownership' and 'discounted sale'.

All council homes now meet the Decent Homes Standard (2010). Housing conditions within the private sector are relatively good (19% non decent against 37% nationally), but some poor condition is evident particularly in parts of the private rented sector, such as houses in multiple occupations and older converted properties.

In proportionate terms the levels of households classified as overcrowded are very low at just over 2% but like many other areas under-occupation is high at around 33% of all homes. This is particular the case amongst older households. There are very low levels of long-term empty homes, 0.5%, signalling the very high demand for property in York.

High demand fuels high prices. There is a significant gulf between average house prices and average earnings. York's average house price is £205,000 (Q1 2011), with lower quartile prices averaging £143,000. This is against median annual household incomes of around £22,000.

Much of the housing stock is not suitable for an ageing population. Home adaptations and help with repairs and maintenance will be important if we want to help people remain independent in their own home for longer. Specialist housing for older people must increasingly be geared

towards those with higher level needs.

Rates of homelessness have declined significantly in recent years thanks to focussed and determined prevention work, though the past 12 months has seen a slight reversal in this trend. Likewise, the number of people in temporary accommodation is significantly below what it was a few years ago. There were only two people sleeping rough when last counted in December 2010. The main causes of homelessness in York are exclusion by parents, relationship breakdown and end of assured short-hold tenancy.

Author:	Chief Officer Responsible for this report:
Paul McCabe, Policy and Planning Manager, Housing Team	Chief Executive