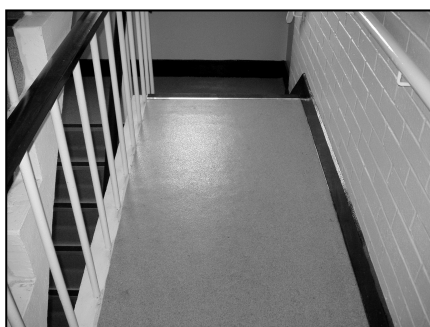


1 **1 Improving housing conditions – Key figures**

2 Excellent progress is being made on improving our housing stock. We are on target to achieve the national
 3 set “decent homes” standards by the target date on 2010.

	2006/7	2007/8 to date
Properties benefited from one or more element of the Tenant’s Choice programme:	417	387
Rewires	402	300
Kitchens	380	265
Bathrooms	352	251
Heating systems	254	86
Heating Only programme	96 (making 350 Heating systems in total)	32 (making 118 planned heating systems installed in total).
Boilers replaced through reactive repairs	335	631
Properties re-roofed	133	39
new windows (completing the current programme)	50	
Properties benefiting from <i>York Pride</i> supplementary works programme		
Alarms	54	34
Doors/Door Entry Systems	111	111
Flooring (Communal areas)	128	118
Lighting (Communal areas)	36	24
Fencing/Groundworks	88	
Drying Areas (communal)		13

2 **2 Summary**



York Pride improvements exceed national standards

• **Housing repairs:** The % of urgent repairs carried out within the government’s timescales is currently running at 88.23% and is forecast to achieve 90% for 200708. Although this will fall short of the target set for the service of 98%, it is a substantial increase on the 84% achieved last year – and the 72% achieved in 2005/06. The average time taken to make non-urgent housing repairs has also improved slightly (currently 8.7 days compared to 9.7 days last year). The service has recognised that in order to move more towards the

13 target of top quartile performance significant system changes are required and have initiated a repairs
 14 service review to facilitate this.

15 • **Housing relets:** The council's housing relet times continue to improve with performance currently running
 16 at 19.8 days – a decrease of 4.2 days on the 2006/07 result and significantly lower than the 32 days
 17 achieved in 2005/06. This is top quartile and is a housing block indicator for CPA.

18 • **Affordable homes** Building is underway on sites at 5th Avenue and Victoria Way. A development partner
 19 for the three Discus Homes sites on has now been approved. This project will replace 100 non-decent
 20 bungalows with 60 new bungalows, 40 extra care sheltered homes, 49 other affordable homes and 49 homes
 21 for sale on the open market. It will also bring in a significant capital receipt to the HRA budget which will
 22 potentially allow us to provide more homes and improve those that already exist in the City.

23 • **Homelessness:** Work has now started on the replacement for the Peasholme Hostel, which will provide
 24 improved facilities for residents and free up land needed for the Hungate development. CYC has recently
 25 been commended by the Department for Communities and Local Government for its work on preventing
 26 homelessness with 250 households prevented from being homeless last year with the number expected to
 27 be 300 by the end of this year.

	05/06 result	06/07 result	07/08 latest	Target	Improving
Average time taken to re-let local authority housing (days)	32	24	21	21	Yes
Average length of stay in B&B accommodation of homeless households (weeks)	4.6	3.3	NYA*	3	N/A
Proportion of successful homelessness prevention cases (in proportion to York households)	2	3.43	NYA*	2.4	N/A
Number of private sector rented homes made decent	New for 06/07	38	NYA*	35	N/A
% of tenants in arrears who have had notices seeking repossession	17.65%	20.50%	NYA*	18.50%	N/A

28 * Available monitor 3

29 **3 Affordable Homes**

30 The Homebuy Plus scheme, developed with Golden Triangle Partners, is due to assist up to another 20
 31 households (17 helped in York in 06/07) to buy a home in 2007/08 - and we are aiming to target existing
 32 council and Housing Association tenants in order to free-up much needed rented homes too.

33 The Golden Triangle partnership is hoping to be successful in a bid for funding incentives to reduce the
 34 under-occupation of existing council and HA homes. This funding would be a mix of funds for white goods,
 35 carpets etc in a new home as well as funding practical support on changing utilities, ctax, removal, child care
 36 on the day of the move etc if needed.

37 The development of affordable 'eco excellent' (eco homes very good standard) homes has started on 5th
 38 Avenue and Victoria Way. This will deliver 19 affordable homes.

39 **4 Private Sector**

40 New security grant to help vulnerable customers delivered in partnership with Safer York partnership has
 41 resulted in 48 enquiries and 16 grants approved so far.

42 Licensing of houses in Multiple Occupation has been successfully implemented with 305 full licences issued
43 and a further 7 licences drafted in 06/07 and sent to landlords in accordance with the legislation. This work is
44 aimed at improving housing conditions in the private rented sector. The team is now focusing on:

- 45 • Identifying properties which require licensing
- 46 • Carrying out full inspections of the properties to ensure that there are no category 1 hazards as
47 defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System- 40 such inspections were carried
48 out 2006/07 and inspections this year have resulted in 77 notices served outlining work to
49 remove hazards.
- 50 • Carrying out unannounced monitoring visits to ensure that the licence conditions are being
51 adhered to; 100 such visits are planned for 2007/08

52 **5 Housing Management**

53 **Letting of empty homes** – there has been a significant improvement in the void turn round times for empty
54 homes. In 2006/07 the void period averaged 3.55 weeks this year so far the void period is 2.80 weeks this is
55 below the 3 week target and is at its lowest level this century.

56 Several factors have led to this improvement :

- 57 • The changes in the way properties are allocated as a result of the restructure
- 58 • The golden goodbye incentive scheme encouraging customers to leave their homes in
59 a better condition (108 awards have been made).
- 60 • Tightening up of procedures and closer monitoring.
- 61 • Redesignation of some of the sheltered street schemes
- 62 • Choice based lettings on hard to let properties (114 lettings)

63 The whole of the voids process has been reviewed and the recommendations from that review are currently
64 being implemented and should lead to further performance improvements

65 **Tackling Anti social behaviour** – The department has reviewed its service in line with the Respect standard
66 in housing management that the government launched in August 2006. A report will be presented in
67 early in the new financial year recommending that York sign up to the standard.

68 The Tenancy enforcement team continue to provide an invaluable service in tackling the most serious issues
69 of anti social behaviour in council accommodation. In 2007 they were directly involved in dealing with 67
70 cases and evicted 18 households for anti social behaviour. In addition to the enforcement work the team
71 have also taken on an interventionist role, trying to ensure that some vulnerable perpetrators sustain their
72 tenancy.

73 **Estate Improvements/Walkabouts**- Housing has been working closely with neighbourhood management,
74 Street Scene, Street Environment to develop a new model for delivering the above. This is being launched
75 this year and is intended to lead to a more focused approach to environmental improvements in each area. It
76 will ultimately lead to ensuring that all the resources available to the area are being used to target specific
77 issues that the community has prioritised.

78 The department has successfully introduced the Tenant In Bloom competition this year will be the third year
79 of the competition that is intended to encourage customers to maintain their gardens.

80 In the next two years the department will be replacing the analogue aerials to it flats providing customers with
81 digital solution in preparation for the digital switch over in 2011.

82 **6 Financial Management**

83 **Income Management** – Performance on arrears recovery continues to improve, in 2006/07 the rent collected
84 as a % of the debit had improved to 97.46% and the arrears as a % of the debit was at 2.60%. The figure in
85 December suggest that we are on target to reduce the arrears by a further £100K this year, this would mean
86 the current tenant arrears would be just over ½ Million pounds, this is remarkable given that 4 years ago the
87 debt was in the region of £1.5 Million.

88 **Former tenant arrears.** - Further initiatives have been introduced such as the prize draw. The CAB debt
89 advice scheme and HARP court advice scheme have ensured that customers are receiving help with
90 management of their debts.

91 **Housing Registrations-** An initial review of the teams work has been completed which has lead to some
92 improved performance. Processing of applications has gone from a situation where the team had a 30 day
93 backlog on processing to a position where the backlog is down to 9 days. Further work is being done on re-
94 engineering processes which hope to bring about further efficiencies.

95 **Customer Services** – the department has significantly improved its performance on answering calls with
96 over 95% of calls being answered in 20seconds.

97 The use of mobile technology is set to dramatically change the way field staff work. A pilot will be run within
98 the income management and surveying teams between January and the year end. If successful it will be
99 rolled out other areas of the department. The indications are it will result in significant improvements in
100 performance and provide a much more responsive service

101 **7 Homelessness and specialist services**

102 The department was successful a bid for refurbishment works
103 programme for the Travellers Sites with joint funding obtained from
104 Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber (GOYH). This
105 work has now been completed with improvements to electric
106 supply, extending the size of pitches and refurbishment of the utility

107 buildings on Clifton

108 Phase 2 of an extensive refurbishment has been carried out to

109 Howe Hill Hostel during 2006/07, 10 units of accommodation have been upgraded or improved bringing
110 additional units into use. When completed the total number of units will have increased from 13 to 27 and will
111 include a wheelchair accessible unit. The homeless hostel at Ordnance Lane has benefited from increased
112 security following the installation of CCTV cameras

113 The department has increased its temporary accommodation by using 92 Holgate Road which reduces the
114 pressure to use the permanent stock as emergency accommodation.

115 A review of the Homelessness Strategy is progress with extensive consultation with stakeholders and service
116 users. This is due for publication in July 2008



Traveller sites have been
refurbished

117 **8 Looking forward**

118 The Council Executive has approved the Discus Board recommendation for the partnership of Tees Valley /
119 Southdale Homes and York Housing Association to be the developer partners. The site at St Anne's will be
120 vacant and ready for redevelopment by the end of March
121 2008. Temporary moves are being organised for residents
122 that wish to move back into a new bungalow and further
123 consultation for residents and the wider community is on
124 going. Aim for a planning application in late spring

125 The new Arc Light is due to be completed in June 2008 and is
126 progressing well on site. The council has secured £3k worth
127 of training through the Chartered Institute of Housing
128 'Leadership for Places of Change' programme funded from
129 CLG as a result of our successful partnership approach to this
130 project.



**The new Arclight Centre will open
in late spring**

131 The contract for the redevelopment of Peasholme has started on site and is due for completion in July 2008.
132 Planning for the successful transfer of the service from its current location is under way.

133 A Places of Change bid is to be submitted to CLG to provide a foyer type scheme for young homeless 16 /17
134 year olds. Ordnance Lane is a suitable location for this new project and this is being considered along with
135 the redevelopment potential of the whole of the Ordnance Lane site

136 The results of the annual monitor of tenant satisfaction with Housing Services are due soon. I am confident
137 that the results will show an improvement in satisfaction levels.

138

139 Sue Sunderland
140 16th January 2008