



**Notice of a public meeting of  
Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny  
Committee (Calling In)**

- To:** Councillors Levene (Chair), Fenton, Flinders, Galvin (Vice-Chair), Gates, Kramm, Lisle, Reid, Williams and Carr
- Date:** Monday, 9 May 2016
- Time:** 5.30 pm
- Venue:** The Auden Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G047)

**AGENDA**

**1. Declarations of Interest**

At this point, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

**2. Public Participation**

It is at this point in the meeting that members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. The deadline for registering is **5.00pm on Friday 6 May 2016**. Members of the public can speak on agenda items or matters within the remit of the committee.

To register to speak please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting, on the details at the foot of the agenda.

### **Filming, Recording or Webcasting Meetings**

Please note this meeting may be filmed and webcast or audio recorded and that includes any registered public speakers, who have given their permission. The broadcast can be viewed at <http://www.york.gov.uk/webcasts> or, if sound recorded, this will be uploaded onto the Council's website following the meeting.

Residents are welcome to photograph, film or record Councillors and Officers at all meetings open to the press and public. This includes the use of social media reporting, i.e. tweeting. Anyone wishing to film, record or take photos at any public meeting should contact the Democracy Officer (whose contact details are at the foot of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.

The Council's protocol on Webcasting, Filming & Recording of Meetings ensures that these practices are carried out in a manner both respectful to the conduct of the meeting and all those present. It can be viewed at [https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/6453/protocol\\_for\\_webcasting\\_filming\\_and\\_recording\\_council\\_meetingspdf](https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/6453/protocol_for_webcasting_filming_and_recording_council_meetingspdf)

3. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 4)  
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2015.
4. **Called-in Item Pre-Decision: Private Sector Housing Strategy** (Pages 5 - 38)  
This report presents an update on the work to revise the Private Sector Housing Strategy to enable Members to consider the reasons for the call-in and provide feedback to inform this ongoing work. The report provides background to the issue called-in and the role of and options available to this committee under the pre-decision call-in arrangements.
5. **Urgent Business**  
Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:  
Name: Jayne Carr  
Contact Details:  
Telephone – (01904) 552030  
Email – [jayne.carr@york.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.carr@york.gov.uk)

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

**This information can be provided in your own language.**

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

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City Of York Council

Committee Minutes

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Meeting	Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee (Calling In)
Date	12 October 2015
Present	Councillors Levene (Chair), Fenton, Flinders, Galvin (Vice-Chair), Gates, Kramm, Lisle, Reid and Williams
In Attendance	Councillors D'Agorne and Looker

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## 7. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interests not included on the register of interests which they may have in respect of the business on the agenda.

Councillor Flinders declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4 Called In item: Park and Ride Contract Option as First operates rail services on instruction from his employer.

## 8. **Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## 9. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

References to Cabinet be changed to Executive.

**10. Called-In Item: Park and Ride Bus Contract Options**

Members received a report which asked them to consider a decision made by the Executive on 24 September 2015 to approve the proposed specification principles and contract arrangements for the Council's Park and Ride service, its procurement and programme timescales.

Details of the Executive's decision were attached at Annex A to the report and the original report of the Acting Director of City and Environmental Services, attached at Annex B.

The original decision had been called in post decision by Councillors D'Agorne, Looker and S Barnes on the following grounds:

- I. The need for further community consultation on the detail, particularly in relation to intermediate stops and operating hours;
- II. The proposal should specify ultra-low emission vehicles will be a core requirement. This is essential to ensure that the City of York is able to meet air quality commitments in the city centre and thus comply with our Air Quality Strategy and EU directives
- III. Minimum levels of evening services and overnight parking provision should be clearly specified as a core specification.

Councillor D'Agorne addressed the meeting on behalf of the group of Calling-In members. He highlighted their principle concern about the impact the Park and Ride contract in its current form may have on York being able to meet its air quality commitments. He questioned why the contract was not requiring only low emission vehicles and also queried whether any consultation had been undertaken before adding additional stopping points to Park and Ride routes, in particular route number 7. Later services until at least 9pm on weekdays and until 10.30pm on weekends were also considered important.

Councillor Looker also spoke on behalf of the group of Calling-In members. She referred to significant hotspots for air quality problems in York, many of which are located in areas frequently used by buses. She felt that it is becoming increasingly important that the issue is tackled and the 8 year park and ride

contract provided an opportunity to work towards hitting air quality targets. In relation to the extension of services into the evening, she felt it was important for bus companies to support the early evening economy, even if it was just at weekends, and it should be a requirement of the contract.

The Executive Member for Planning and Transport spoke in response to the points made for the call-in of the decision. In relation to the comments made about later services and additional stops, he agreed that after 7pm there could be some scope for Park and Ride services to be amended to run later and stop at additional stops. He also considered an increase to the length of stay in Park and Ride car parks to 72 hours to be reasonable. In relation to the comments made by Councillor D'Agorne regarding the consultation and intermediate stops for route number 7, it was discussed at Executive that there will be further work involving residents and the Ward Councillors regarding which stops to retain. In response to comments made about requiring low emission vehicles he referred to paragraph 31 of the Executive report dated 24<sup>th</sup> September and suggested that the wording should be amended to state: 'Having sought competitive bids for the park and ride contract, members will be given the opportunity to determine whether the costs relating to the implementation of ultra low emission vehicle technology are sufficiently outweighed by the air quality benefits the City would experience as a result' He reminded members that while there is a desire for low emission vehicles, cost will be a factor.

Some questions to the Executive Member raised issues regarding the amount of public consultation which had been carried out on Park and Ride services and additional stops.

The Acting Director of City and Environmental Services provided further information in answer to Members questions and in support of the Executive's decision. He referred to the clarification of the wording of paragraph 31 of the Executive Report as outlined by the Executive Member and advised that it was the intention that the words were recorded as part of this meeting in order to provide clarification on the intentions of that paragraph rather than it being another Executive decision. In response to queries about consultation, Officers advised that the surveys carried out included people returning from the city centre as well as local residents who had used stops along the routes to access services.

Following further questions and lengthy debate the options were considered and put to the vote and it was:

Resolved: That Option A be approved and the decision of the Executive be confirmed.

Reason: To enable the called-in matter to be dealt with efficiently and in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

Cllr D Levene, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.15 pm].





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**Corporate & Scrutiny Management Policy &  
Scrutiny Committee (Pre-Decision Calling – In)**

**9 May 2016**

Report of the Assistant Director, Governance and ICT

**Called-in Item Pre-Decision: Private Sector Housing Strategy**

**Summary**

1. This report presents an update on the work to revise the Private Sector Housing Strategy to enable Members to consider the reasons for the call-in and provide feedback to inform this ongoing work.
2. The report sets out brief background to the issue called-in and the role of and options available to this Committee, under the agreed pre-decision call-in arrangements.

**Background**

3. At its meeting in August 2015, the Executive agreed some operational guidelines for enabling and supporting a pre-decision call-in process. This supplements the pre-existing arrangements for post-decision call in and is intended to provide all backbench and scrutiny Members with opportunities to comment upon relevant upcoming Executive or Executive Member decisions.
4. In accordance with the arrangements for pre-decision scrutiny call-in, three Members (Councillors Boyce Barnes (N) and Flinders) have called in the intended decision in relation to the Private Sector Housing Strategy, for the following reason:
  - (i) To provide input on addressing the efficacy of the current voluntary accreditation scheme;
  - (ii) To establish ways in which the council can improve on a lack of available data on the quality of private sector housing stock;
  - (iii) To consider how the strategy ties in with the planning system.

## **Consultation**

5. In accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, the calling-in Members have been invited to attend and/or speak at the Call-In meeting, as appropriate, together with the appropriate Executive member and officers.

## **Options**

6. In relation to dealing with this pre decision call-in, in accordance with the new agreed arrangements Members may choose to provide feedback to officers to inform their ongoing work on the draft strategy ahead of it being presented to the Executive in July 2016.

## **Analysis**

7. Members need to consider the reasons for call-in and any comments made at the meeting by speakers, as well as have regard to the information in the officer's report to the Executive on this matter.

## **Council Plan**

8. There are no direct implications for this call-in in relation to the delivery of the Council Plan and its priorities for 2015-19.

## **Implications**

9. There are no known Financial, HR, Legal, Property, Equalities, or Crime and Disorder implications in relation to the following in terms of dealing with the specific matter before Members; namely, to consider and handle the pre decision call-in. However, if it became clear to the Committee from information received that there were implications associated with any comments/recommendations it wished to make then it would be appropriate for the Committee to also recommend that any such implications be looked into, prior to the Executive making a decision which might be affected by those implications.

## **Risk Management**

10. There are no direct risk management implications associated with considering the call in of this matter. However, the Committee would be advised to invite the Executive to take account of any risks associated with any comments/recommendations which the Committee may wish to make on the matter in hand, prior to implementing any decision.

**Recommendations:**

11. Having considered the reasons for call-in, Members are asked to note and comment upon the draft strategy and action plan which has taken into account:
- (i) The new evidence base for the private sector housing stock from the Building Research Establishment (BRE) and
  - (ii) The recent government consultation on extending Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing, the response to the consultation and the proposed approach towards future HMO Licensing and the review of the city-wide accreditation scheme.

**Reason:** To provide scrutiny's views on the ongoing work to revise the Private Sector Housing Strategy.

**Contact details:**

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**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Andrew Docherty  
Assistant Director, Governance and ICT

**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 28 April 2016

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** None

**Wards Affected:**

**All**



**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Annexes**

Appendix 1 – Private Sector Housing Strategy Report

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## Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee

9<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Report of the Assistant Director, Housing and Community Safety

### Review of the Private Sector Strategy

#### Summary

1. This report presents information on the ongoing work to revise the Private Sector Housing Strategy in support of the recent pre-decision call-in.
2. In reviewing the Private Sector Strategy two key areas of work has been taken into account:
  - a. The new evidence base for private sector stock from the Building Research Establishment (BRE); and
  - b. The recent government consultation on extending Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing, our response to the consultation and our proposed approach towards future HMO licensing and the review of the city wide accreditation scheme.

#### Background

3. Since 2003 York has had a Private Sector Strategy, developed with the input of a Steering Group of internal and external partners, which focuses on the largest housing sector in the city and uses the evidence base provided by stock condition surveys to identify areas of work. The key outcomes from the 2008-13 strategy were:
  - For home owners: a focus on expanding the role of the AgeUK York Home Service Directory and the provision of advice and assistance to the most vulnerable homeowners to help them maintain their homes including the provision of a limited number of loans funded through the recycling of grant/loans. The most recent being the development of the new Energy Repayment Loan due to be launched in Summer 2016.

- For landlords and tenants: the implementation of Article 4 to help control and manage the number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the city and the renewal of the Mandatory HMO licence scheme to ensure that the HMOs are safe to live in. The introduction of the innovative accreditation scheme **YorProperty** towards the end of 2015 which aims to raise standards throughout the private rented sector by recognising landlords who provide well managed and well maintained properties. The introduction and growth of the **YorHome** Social Lettings Agency to help residents access the private rented sector.
- For the most vulnerable residents: an increasing number of residents have been helped to access the disabled facilities grant. A direct comparison of the same period under the previous strategy (2003- 2008) saw nearly 37.8% more residents helped to remain safe and independent at home, this was complimented by the expansion of the York Handyperson scheme.
- For all residents: the introduction of the separate Empty Property Strategy has enabled the council to reduce the number of empty homes and at the same time maximise the amount of funding through the New Homes Bonus and resulted in the council obtaining its first compulsory purchase order.
- Partnership work has resulted in a number of successful funding bids, for example;
  - a) Two successful Warmer Homes Healthy People Fund bids (AgeUk York/Yorkshire Energy Partnership/Public Health)
  - b) Fuel Poverty Fund bid led by York on behalf of York and North Yorkshire enabled more than 200 energy efficient boilers to be installed, by the Yorkshire Energy Partnership, in vulnerable residents homes across York And North Yorkshire
  - c) There have been several schemes in York which have seen an improvement in the energy efficiency of private sector homes with the aim of reducing carbon emissions and fuel poverty in the city. The most significant recent ones being:
    - More than 1600 private homes insulated under the 'Wrapping up York' Scheme 2012-13;

- 2012/13 also saw the completion of the Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) in the Hull Road area of the city. The following measures were installed across all tenures

Scheme	Loft	Cavity	Solid Wall	Heating	PV panels
CESP	221	19	30	47	32

- The Warming up York scheme (DECC funding) helped 31 homeowners to install external solid wall insulation.
  - Launch of the collective switch in spring 2013 helped over 1000 residents to switch to energy suppliers offering cheaper tariffs. This has helped more than 1000 households in York save an estimated £200,000 off their energy bills.
4. The refresh of the 5 year Private Sector Housing Strategy was delayed to enable a refreshed evidence base to be developed to ensure that any new strategy was able to respond to any newly arising issues.
  5. In February 2015 Cabinet approved the commissioning of research as part of a wider tender with other local authorities within the Leeds City Region to ensure economies of scale in tender price and to develop a consistent evidence base with our near neighbours. In addition, it was agreed that a Health Impact Assessment would be carried out as part of the research and that the data would be linked to the Local Property Gazetteer. The total cost of the research was £46k.
  6. In July 2015 the council commissioned the BRE to provide two key reports:
    - a. On the condition of the private sector housing stock;
    - b. A Health Impact Assessment of poor housing conditions in terms of their effect on occupiers and visitors.
  7. The BRE reports were received in December 2015 and the new evidence base has been used to draft the new strategy and action plan with Partners (see appendix A and B). As a result of this work there is now a stronger emphasis of the impact of poorer housing on the health of occupants.

8. In line with previous strategies we have outlined a number of aims and objectives which seek to maintain and improve the condition of private homes (across the owner-occupied and the private rented sector) which forms nearly 85% of the city's total housing stock. The new objectives are:
  - Encourage and support owner occupiers to maintain safe homes, free from category 1 hazards;
  - Encourage, support and regulate private landlords and agents to provide safe and well managed properties, free from category 1 hazards. Inform and support tenants around what they can expect;
  - To enable people whose independence may be at risk safely remain in or return to their home;
  - Maximise use of the existing housing stock to increase the supply of decent affordable homes;
  - Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty;
9. The second aim is of particular significance as it focuses on both the condition and the management of the Private Rented Sector, which forms 19% of the housing stock. As members are fully aware a significant part of the private rented stock is made up of HMOs and that the poorest conditions have been found in this tenure.
10. Our previous strategy and subsequent implementation policy papers approved an approach to ensure that we licensed all HMOs which are required to be licensed by the national mandatory scheme and to introduce a voluntary accreditation scheme not only to raise standards in HMOs not covered by the scheme but also in the wider private rented sector.
11. In 2012 the development of an accreditation scheme for private rented properties was approved and subsequently introduced in 2013. In 2014 the implementation of the accreditation scheme was reviewed following its first year. In February 2015 following a consultation exercise with tenants, landlords/letting agents and residents, the then Cabinet approved that we should continue with the accreditation scheme but to commission the BRE to provide an updated evidence base and then to carry out a more detailed consultation focusing on groups which didn't respond.



12. In the intervening period the government issued a consultation document in November 2015 asking for views from the sector about, amongst other things, extending HMO licensing to smaller HMOs. The government covering report advised that they were minded to extending licensing to two storey HMOs with 5 or more occupants. Our response was to simplify the process that all HMOs should be licensed. This would effectively bringing licensing and planning legislation in line.
13. Telephone discussions with government officials advise that there has been a good response to the consultation and that they will publish the response sometime in spring and, if they are “minded to”, that some legislation would be enacted towards the backend of this year.

### **Consultation**

14. The steering group of Partners has met to consider the new evidence base to develop a new strategy. A wider consultation is now taking place which will end on the 20<sup>th</sup> May to capture views from others including the private rented sector e.g. Landlords, Landlord Association, tenants, other stakeholders and residents

### **Council Plan**

15. The Private Sector housing Strategy ties in to the three key priorities for the council
  - **a prosperous city for all** - where local businesses can thrive and residents have good quality jobs, housing and opportunities
  - **a focus on frontline services** - to ensure all residents, particularly the least advantaged, can access reliable services and community facilities
  - **a council that listens to residents** - to ensure it delivers the services they want and works in partnership with local communities

### **Implications**

16. The report is for information only and there are no other implications at this stage.

### **Risk Management**

17. There are no risks associated with this report

**Contact Details****Author:****Ruth Abbott**

Housing Standards and  
Adaptations Manager  
Housing Services  
01904 554092

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:****Steve Waddington**

Assistant Director – Housing &amp; Community Safety

**Report  
Approved****Date** 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all***All****For further information please contact the author of the report****Background Papers:**

- February 2015 Cabinet Report and supporting papers.  
<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=733&MIId=8333&Ver=4>
- BRE Research  
(available with the online agenda papers for this meeting)
- Proposals Regarding the Introduction of a Voluntary Landlord Accreditation Scheme in York – report to Cabinet 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012
- “YorProperty” – The Introduction of a Voluntary Landlord Accreditation Scheme in York – report to Cabinet Member 13<sup>th</sup> June 2013
- Approval steps for additional and selective licensing designations in England – DCLG Guidance Document
- Relevant research documents and details relating to specific schemes – details available from the author on request
- Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2008
- Findings of York Private Rented Sector Consultation Oct/Nov 2014
- Controlling the Concentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document Review – report to Cabinet 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**Annexes**

Annex 1 - Draft Private Sector Strategy

Annex 2 - Draft action plan

## **Abbreviations**

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Building Research Establishment (BRE)

Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP)

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# *A Healthier Future*

## Private Sector Housing Strategy

**2016-2021**

### **Contents**

Foreword	2
Introduction	3
Our aims and objectives	4
Action plan	12
Making sure we deliver	12
Your comments and further information	12
Appendices – Summary of the BRE evidence base	

### **Foreword Cllr Carr**

In York we are working closely with Partners and residents to tackle poverty and disadvantage. There are clear plans to improve health and wellbeing and protect the vulnerable. There is a vision for York to be a leading sustainable city and ambitious plans for ongoing economic prosperity. Under the new One Planet York programme the city will strive to be a leading sustainable, One Planet city with strong performance in three areas: in the vibrancy and diversity of the local economy, the health and social wellbeing of residents and the quality of the built and natural environment.

Underpinning all these aims is good quality housing. That is why I am proud to introduce this new strategy. It sets out what we'll do to ensure York's private housing stock remains amongst the very best available.

We are starting from a strong base. There are a relatively low proportion of poor private homes and overall energy efficiency rates are high. There are few empty properties and little overcrowding.

But we must not be complacent. Within this overall picture poor conditions can still be found and there's always more we can do to ensure homes are fit for the future.

I am particularly keen to involve the private rented sector given the increasingly important role it plays in York's overall housing provision. This strategy highlights how we can engage with private landlords and work alongside them to continue improving York's housing stock

I am grateful to our various partner organisations who have contributed to the development of this strategy – it is testament to the very high value we place on partnership working across the City

Please do get in touch if you think there is anything we have missed or could do better.

## Introduction

This strategy for Housing in the Private Sector, both for Homeowners and Private rented. The focus of the strategy has been to ensure that homes are healthier for the occupants. It has been developed and delivered by a steering group made up of a wide range of local agencies and groups.<sup>1</sup> It is the responsibility of each member of the group to play their part in delivering the actions in the strategy.

The strategy is based on data from research carried out by the Building Research Establishment ( BRE) . The research had two main aims, to identify and highlight the extent of the main category 1 hazards found in homes in York, and also to highlight the health impacts of poor housing and the costs they present to the NHS and to society. A category 1 hazard is one that presents a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety. The main category 1 hazards in York are falls and excess cold.<sup>2</sup>

Housing and Public Health have come together to create a joint strategy in acknowledgement of the strong links

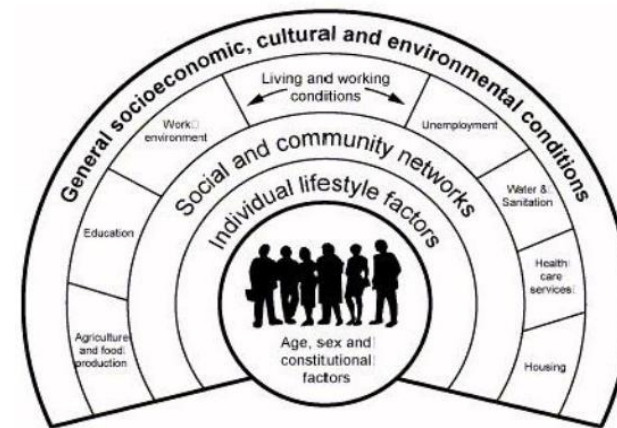
<sup>1</sup> For a list of steering group members see: [http://www.york.gov.uk/info/200485/housing\\_plans\\_and\\_strategies/417/housing\\_plans\\_and\\_strategies/9](http://www.york.gov.uk/info/200485/housing_plans_and_strategies/417/housing_plans_and_strategies/9)

<sup>2</sup> Appendices of the summary are at the end of the document

between housing condition and individuals' health. Public Health often uses the Dahlgren and Whitehead model in figure 1 to represent in the factors that affect individuals health, with living conditions and housing both playing key roles.

We all know the quality of home we live in can have a significant impact on every aspect of our lives. Poor housing conditions, overcrowding and affordability will all have an adverse affect on public health and wellbeing and exacerbate health inequalities. Making modifications to improve a home can lead to enhanced health and wellbeing that not only benefits the individual but also brings wider social and economic benefits.

Figure 1: Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991)



Property type, condition and heating will all influence a home's energy efficiency standard and the occupant's ability to afford adequate heating. Improving energy

efficiency in the home will help to prevent excess winter deaths each year by helping to ensure homes are adequately heated, through reduced heat loss and improved heating systems. This will also reduce carbon emissions.

York’s housing market is made up of a private and a social sector. Around **86 percent** of York’s **87,507<sup>3</sup>** homes are in the private sector, which equates to 72,814 dwellings. This includes **58,999 owner occupied** (80% of private sector) and **15,906 rented from a private landlord** (20% of private sector).

Investing in our homes and ensuring standards are maintained delivers a wide range of positive outcomes not just for us personally but for the city as a whole:

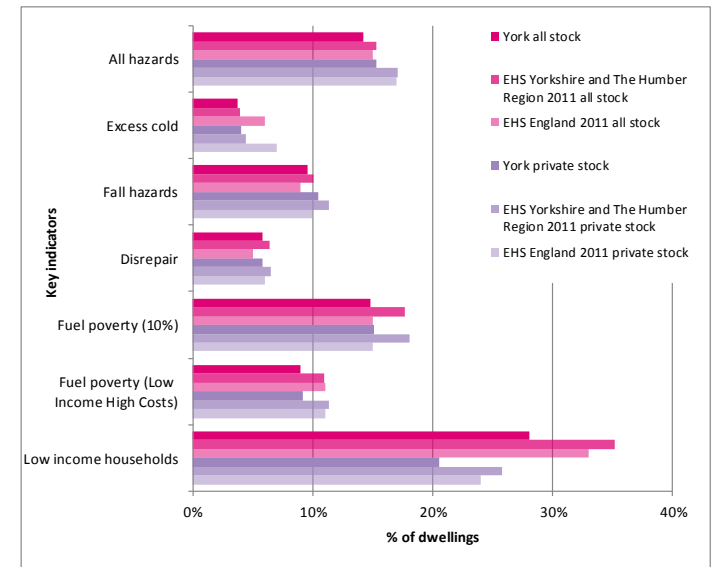
- Fewer homes that pose a risk to health and well being
- Improved outcomes for families and young people
- More independence for older or vulnerable households
- Lower carbon emissions improved energy efficiency and reduced fuel poverty
- Less anti-social behaviour relating to derelict or nuisance properties
- Less poverty and communities that are more cohesive, attractive and economically vibrant.

<sup>3</sup> BRE Database 2015

This strategy sets out what partners in York will do to support good standards within private sector homes in York, including tackling poor housing conditions, energy efficiency and management. It sets out the challenges we know exist and our objectives and intended outcomes in dealing with them. Partnership working is essential to achieve the aims and objectives in the strategy, the opportunities to improve partnership working are identified within each of the strategic aims.

Most would agree the primary responsibility for repairing and maintaining homes rests with the property owner. Many millions of pounds have been invested over the years to ensure York’s private housing stock compares well to other areas.

But within this overall picture significant challenges remain. Some of our homes do not meet expected standards and can have damaging





consequences on our health and wellbeing. **11,444 dwellings**<sup>4</sup> in the private sector have a category 1 hazard, which equates to **15% of dwellings**. The total cost of mitigating category 1 hazards in York's private sector stock is estimated to be **£24.2m**. The estimated cost to the NHS of treating accidents and ill- health caused by these hazards is **£2.3m** each year and the wider costs to society **£5.7m**

The bedrock of our approach has involved encouragement and support to home owners and partnerships with landlords and other partners. This will continue but inline with the new evidence base and the wider council's ambitions we will be seeking ways to ensure that we align our services to tackle problems earlier and prevent the impact on other services such as the National Health Service.

However, where these efforts fail we must be prepared to take more decisive action especially in the private rented sector using the enforcement powers available.

Local landlords, agents and their associations are key partners. We recognise the most responsible landlords have an interest in promoting better standards to raise the standing of the whole sector and avoid the need for further regulation. We want to incentivise the best landlords to be

true 'champions'. However, with **3,711** dwellings in the sector having category 1 hazards we are also aware of some landlords not providing accommodation that meets requirements; where encouragement and support fails, we will take enforcement action.

The accompanying action plan sets out in far greater detail what we hope to achieve and by when. We will use the action plan to monitor progress over time.

### Aims and objectives

1. Encourage and support owner occupiers to maintain safe homes, free from category 1 hazards
2. Encourage, support and regulate private landlords and agents to provide safe and well managed properties, free from category 1 hazards. Inform and support tenants around what they can expect
3. To enable people whose independence may be at risk safely remain in or return to their home
4. Maximise use of the existing housing stock to increase the supply of decent affordable homes
5. Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty

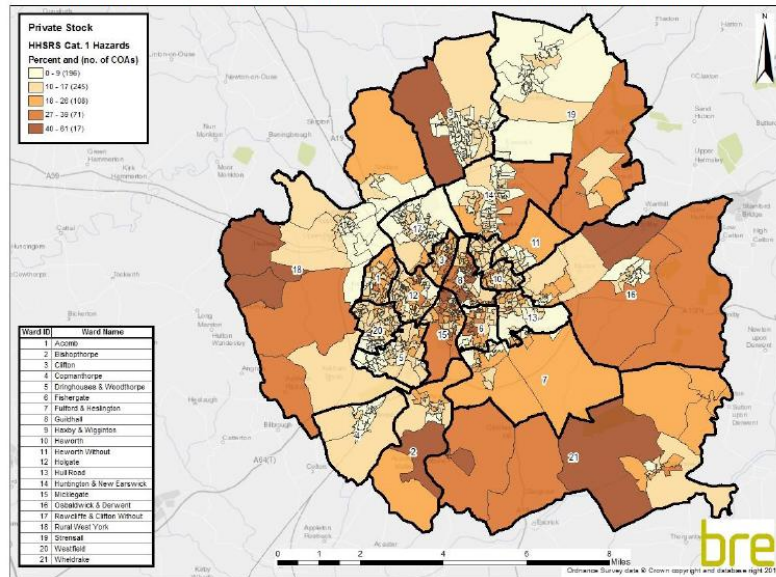
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<sup>4</sup> BRE 2015

## 1. Encourage and support owner occupiers to maintain safe homes, free from category 1 hazards

There are **58,999** owner occupied homes in York, **7,733** of those have category 1 hazards.<sup>5</sup> The main hazards are falls on the stairs (4,645), excess cold (1,932) and falls on level surfaces (1,066). The estimated cost of mitigating these hazards is £15.2m [NB some dwellings have more than one category 1 hazard, accounting for the difference between number of hazards and number of dwellings with hazards]

Percentage of private sector dwellings in York with the presence of a HHSRS category 1 hazard



There are high levels of hazards in Guildhall, Clifton and Micklegate wards.

<sup>5</sup> BRE Database 2015

A key challenge will be to encourage and support owner occupiers to invest in their homes to maintain them to a good standard and remove category 1 hazards. Some of the main obstacles the strategy will need to tackle include the costs involved in carrying out the work, being able to identify hazards and knowing what work is required to remove them and difficulty finding reliable trades people.

**17 %** of owner occupier households are on low incomes. The limited public funds that are available must be used as a safety net for those unable to access the necessary resources and made available on a loan basis to assist more people. We should continue to prioritise vulnerable households for assistance, such as the Homes and Loans Service.

### Objectives and outcomes:

- Increased public awareness of the range of services available to encourage and support owner occupiers
- Reduced proportion of category 1 hazards in dwellings in the poorest performing areas, households and dwelling types
- Encourage and support greater access to home appreciation loans and equity release products to fund repairs and maintenance

## 2. Encourage, support and regulate private landlords and agents in providing safe and well managed properties, free from category 1 hazards. Inform and support tenants around what they can expect.

The number of people renting privately has nearly doubled between 2001 and 2011<sup>6</sup>. In York, the sector now accounts for 18 percent of all households. With continued barriers to home ownership and limited social rented homes, the sector looks set to remain an important source of housing for the foreseeable future.

Rented accommodation meets a diverse range of needs. It provides a flexible option for those who do not want to buy or can't afford to buy or are saving up for a deposit. It offers a range of shared accommodation for smaller households and is increasingly used by a growing number of families.

### Condition and standards

In many cases the sector provides high quality housing opportunities, but there are still challenges, particularly in relation to property conditions. Whilst average conditions are good and above the national average, there are **3,711 properties** in the private rented sector that have category 1 hazards.<sup>7</sup> This equates to 23% of the private rented stock having one or more category 1 hazards. We aim to

reduce the gap between tenures and dwelling types by 2021.

The council has a statutory duty and a range of powers to address sub-standard conditions such as serious<sup>8</sup> hazards. It can also intervene in cases of illegal eviction and harassment. Demand for action is largely initiated by the tenant and is therefore reliant on high levels of public awareness.

Around 85 percent of private landlords own just one or two properties<sup>9</sup>. We work closely with local landlord bodies to raise awareness of issues and run an annual York Landlord Fair.

Despite these efforts, overall engagement with everyday landlords is limited and council data on the sector is patchy. There is always more we can do to improve our understanding of the sector and ensure tenants and landlords are clear about their rights and responsibilities.

We receive about 300 reports a year from tenants about poor conditions and management and we act upon these in line with our Enforcement Policy<sup>10</sup>. We need to find ways to encourage more reporting and we will do this by

<sup>8</sup> A Category 1 hazard in the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme

<sup>9</sup> CYC Consultation Exercise October 2014

<sup>10</sup> Enforcement Policy

<https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/2187/enforcementpolicy2010pdf>

<sup>6</sup> LGiU September 2013

<sup>7</sup> BRE 2015

targeting our services in the worst performing areas and sectors.

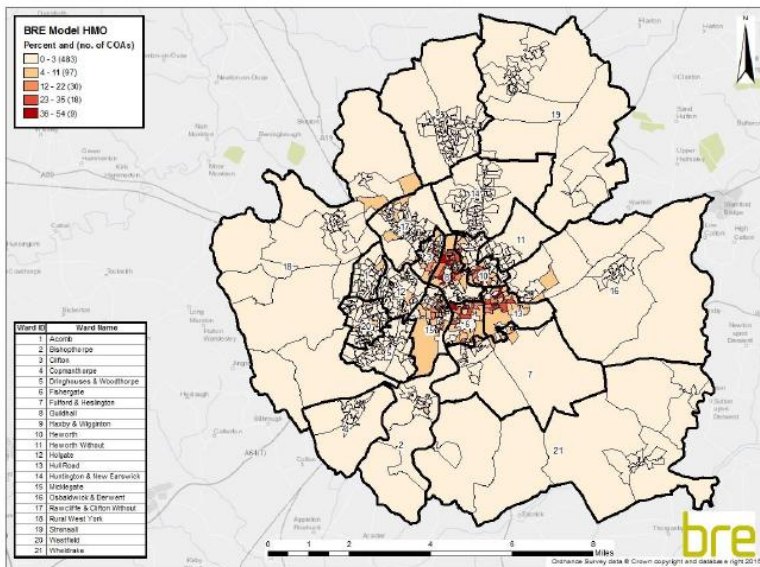
Shared accommodation

There are just under 3,000 houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in the city. Larger shared homes are subject to mandatory licensing that ensures relevant standards are maintained. There are **470** Licensed properties in the city.

In 2011, the council introduced a city-wide Article 4 Direction<sup>11</sup>, designed to regulate the future growth of shared homes in areas with already high levels of shared accommodation.

In 2014 the council introduced a major new initiative to improve the management and physical condition of private rented dwellings, as well as reduce the health and safety risks to tenants. YorProperty is a voluntary accreditation scheme aiming to recognise and encourage good landlords. **338** properties are accredited. We have built on this and introduced a training programme for landlords and agents and have made it a condition of our licensing scheme that all Licence holders must have a recognised qualification.

Map 12: Percentage of HMOs based on BRE modelled data



In the last year the Government has announced a range of measures aimed at improving standards in the sector including the requirement to install Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms, the requirement for letting agents to

<sup>11</sup>

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/responsibilities/planningpermission/permited>

publicise their fees and which redress scheme they have joined and measures to prevent retaliatory eviction.

In November 2015 the Government also consulted on the need to extend HMO licensing to smaller HMOs and self contained flats which had been poorly converted. Our feedback acknowledged that there was more to be done to regulate this particular sector.

### Accessing the private rented sector

High costs and high demand for private rented homes in York means many, particularly those with the least resources, can find their options limited. Ongoing changes to housing benefit rules are set to restrict access further.

A significant number of private halls of residence have been or are currently being built in York, which offer accommodation to students. These additional bed spaces may result in the release of other accommodation presently occupied by students and we shall be monitoring the potential changes on the numbers and types of accommodation available in the student rented sector.

We have started to address some of the barriers faced by low income and vulnerable households seeking to access private rented accommodation through our innovative YorHome social lettings agency.

This is based on a strong partnership with local landlords and is moving from strength to strength with over 80 properties now in management. The agency has helped landlords improve their properties so they can take part in the scheme.

There will be growing demand for shared homes as changes in welfare eligibility restrict choice for the under 35s. The expected increase in the number of houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) will need to be managed to ensure neighborhoods remain sustainable.

The private rented sector is expected to play an increasing role in helping prevent homelessness as the availability of social rented homes continues to outstrip supply.

### Objectives and outcomes

- Encourage and support landlords and agents to reduce number of category 1 hazards in private rented homes with a particular focus on HMOs and poorest performing areas
- Consider the need to extend licensing of HMOs to smaller HMOs
- Improve the sector by ensuring that all landlords and agents have access to good quality training

- Regulate more robustly and take action against the worst landlords and agents
- Increased awareness of tenants rights, responsibilities and support available

### **3. To enable people whose independence may be at risk safely remain in or return to their home**

York has a growing number of older households and people with disabilities and complex needs. It has higher than the national average figure for vulnerable households living in and returning to homes with category 1 hazards. Much of the existing housing stock is not designed with the needs of these groups in mind.

In terms of independence, this goes beyond just the individual's home, but incorporates the support that is or could be provided. The support required is often small, but without it an individual would be put at greater risk of accident or illness.

#### Vulnerable households and poor conditions

When we last surveyed local residents<sup>12</sup> we found almost 19,000 vulnerable private sector households across the city

with 3,900 of these living in non-decent homes. Such households must remain our top priority.

#### Home adaptations

The need for home adaptations to support independence in the home is high and is set to increase. The main types of adaptations needed include adapted bathrooms and toilets, lifts and level or ramped access. The Disabled Facilities Grant can be used to meet some of these needs but the amount available each year is limited.

#### Practical help

We also identified growing demand for a range of low level interventions such as practical help around the home. We must address the low level of awareness about housing options and the 'stay at home' services available to support independence. There are numerous services provided by partners in the City including AgeUK and Be Independent.

Through closer working with internal and external partners, we will build on existing support schemes, and explore and raise awareness of innovative methods of support services across the city.

<sup>12</sup> 2008 Private sector stock condition survey

## Objectives and outcomes:

- Reduce number of category 1 hazards relating to falls in households with older people/children to prevent early and/or unnecessary admissions of residents to hospital, nursing care and or residential care.
- Ensure that those who need adaptations to help them remain in or return to their accommodation receive the appropriate level of advice, support and assistance
- Increase awareness of the range of ‘stay at home services’ available to support independence

## **4. Maximise use of the existing private sector housing stock**

### Empty homes

In York’s competitive housing market every home counts. In recent years the council has stepped up pressure on owners who keep their properties empty for long periods.

Much of this has involved effective dialogue with owners. However we have stepped up our enforcement focusing properties which have been vacant for some time and the severity of problems arising from the property. It is our intention to continue this work as we know that such properties have a detriment on the neighbouring residents.

Area	Total dwellings Nov 2014	Vacant dwellings (total)		Private sector properties vacant for more than six months	
		Number	Vacancy rate	Number	Vacancy rate
York	86770	847	0.98%	194	0.2%
North Yorkshire	279200	8,983	3.23%	2836	1.0%
England	23,111,000	610, 123	2.64%	205,821	0.9%

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

The council’s focus on empty properties has recently extended to empty space above shops. A recent study found potential for up to 800 additional flats in the city centre.<sup>13</sup>

### Overcrowding

Just over three percent of homes are overcrowded.<sup>14</sup> Whilst this is a relatively low figure, where overcrowding does occur it can have serious impacts on a person’s health and wellbeing and undermine children’s education.

<sup>13</sup> Upper floors in York City Centre: An opportunity 2013

<sup>14</sup> 2011 Census

## Under-occupation

More concerning are rates of under-occupation. Around 75 percent of private sector homes in the city are under-occupied. A significant number of under-occupying households are older. Under occupation is one of the factors contributing to fuel poverty, and the ability of the household to heat their homes sufficiently. This leads to numerous health related issues, including increased falls.

Under-occupation is a key issue for the city, especially now new housing supply is so constrained. We must continue to work with developers to deliver more attractive housing options for older people and extend our housing advice and information to increase awareness and facilitate choice. We must look to address the practical barriers that many aspiring downsizers say they face when considering a move.

### Objectives and outcomes:

1. Maintain accurate information about the numbers of long-term empty Properties.
2. Encourage owners of privately owned empty homes to bring them back into use.
3. Target owners whose empty homes cause a significant detrimental impact to the neighbourhood.

4. Strengthen existing and develop new partnerships to reduce the number of long-term empty homes in particular above shops
5. Reduce the proportion of under occupied private sector homes

### **5. Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty**

#### Energy efficiency

The vision is for York to work towards being a sustainable, resilient and collaborative 'One- Planet' city. Housing in York will make a significant contribution to this vision. In 2012, the energy we used in our homes was responsible for just under **40%** of the total carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emitted in our city (1.1million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> Improving the energy efficiency of properties will not only help to cut carbon emissions but it will also reduce energy consumption putting more money in people's pockets. Being able to afford heating bills and ensuring homes are warm and not damp or draughty also reduces ill health and the demands put on health services.

**OnePlanetYork** 



The city’s private sector housing stock shows average overall levels of energy efficiency when compared to other areas. Owner Occupied properties have an average SAP rating of **59** and Private Rented Properties have an average of **56**.<sup>15</sup> However, there are some areas that fall below the city’s average.

Under the Energy Act 2011, new rules mean that from 2018 landlords must ensure that their properties meet a minimum energy efficiency standard. Subject to Parliamentary approval, this minimum standard has been set at band E by 1 April 2018. Currently, **10%** of the Private rented sector is below an E, equating to **1,588** dwellings.

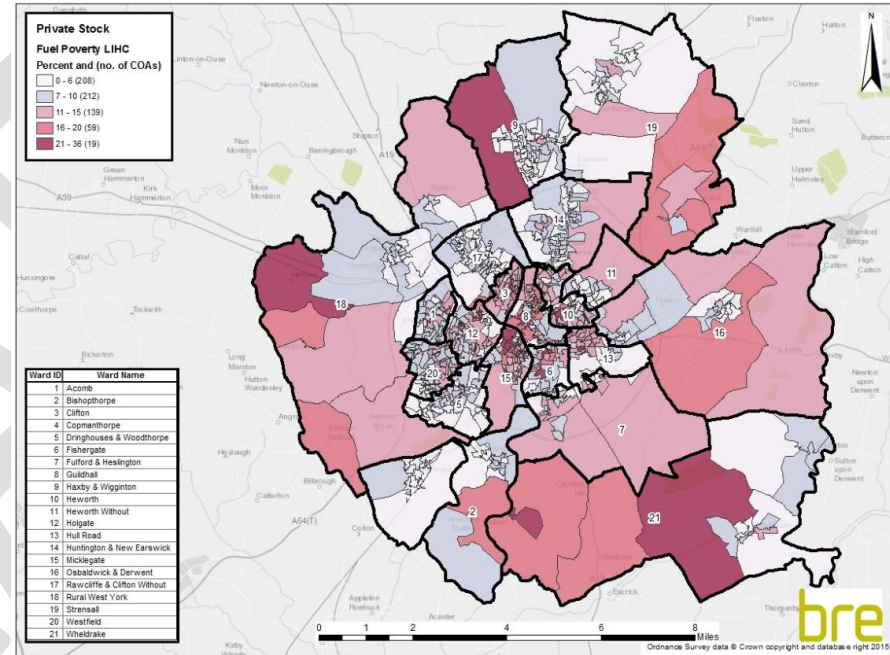
A significant amount of work has been done in recent years to improve the energy efficiency of private sector homes in York, made possible in part through various national funding streams.

Fuel poverty

City wide, **7,695** households were estimated to be fuel poor, 9% of the population. **3,142** households (**20%**) of households living in the private rented sector are living in fuel poverty. The highest concentrations of fuel in the private rented sector are found in the wards of **Clifton Guildhall and Micklegate** and for excess cold the highest

concentrations are in Wheldrake, Guildhall and Rural West York

We have mapped fuel poverty ‘hot spots’ around the city and will use this to target future interventions



The main drivers of fuel poverty include lack of energy efficiency measures and low household income.

We have already begun working more smartly with residents to reduce fuel poverty by working with Better Homes York, working with Citizen Advice York and the introduction of the Big Community switch.

<sup>15</sup> BRE Database using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP).

Better Homes York is a council endorsed energy efficiency scheme set-up to help private homeowners, private tenants and private landlords across the city, create and live in warmer, healthier homes and reduce the cost of fuel bills.

The scheme accesses available government funding to optimise homeowners' investment and to get the best offers for them in the following areas:

- insulation measures
- heating
- boilers
- renewable energy technologies

Citizens' Advice York has begun a project aimed at providing bespoke energy advice to residents of the city through a programme of community and individual outreach. This is working closely with Better Homes York to provide an holistic service. Citizens' Advice also has a focus on energy tariff switching which runs in parallel with the council's collective switch programme.

To help residents in York get a better deal on their energy bills, the council has partnered with iChoosr, on the national Big Community Switch scheme. This has helped just under 1000 households in York save an estimated £200,000 off their energy bills.

The aim of the scheme is to make it easy and simple for residents to switch energy providers. The next big switch will open for registrations in May 2016

### **Objectives and outcomes:**

- Improve energy efficiency by targeting work in the worst performing areas and property types
- Reduced incidence of fuel poverty through targeted work in the poorest performing areas and property types
- Minimum of 200 households improve energy efficiency through maximising funding opportunities from LCR/YNYER/other partners

## **Governance, Partnerships and Monitoring**

### **Making sure we deliver**

The steering group that developed this strategy will meet at least annually to review progress and ensure the strategy remains responsive to emerging needs.

We will produce a short annual report to be published on the council's website.

Within the action plan, the baseline position along with a target and date to be achieved accompanies each objective.

## Partnerships

Strong partnerships form the foundation of this strategy. It is important to maintain and develop regional partnerships, including in the Leeds City Region and North Yorkshire, and also local partnerships, including the Safer York Partnership, Age UK, Citizens' Advice, iChooser and the Clinical Commissioning Group.

## Action plan

The commitments outlined above are set out more fully in the attached strategy action plan. This contains specific measurable outcomes against which we will assess progress.

Both quantitative and qualitative measure will be used to monitor the progress of the strategy.

## Your comments and further information

We would really like to know what you think about this strategy or private sector housing in general.

You can leave comments or ask questions at any time using the contact details below:

Email: [housing.standards@york.gov.uk](mailto:housing.standards@york.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01904 552300

We will consider your comments at our review meetings and get back to you should you need a response.

Further copies of this strategy are available to download from the council's website [www.york.gov.uk/housing](http://www.york.gov.uk/housing)

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1	<b>Strategic Aim 1. Encourage and support owner occupiers to maintain safe homes free from category one hazards</b>			
1	<b>Partnerships: Homes and Loans Service, Age UK York, Ward Members</b>			
1	<b>Objectives and outcomes</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Baseline position</b>	<b>Target/date</b>
1	Reduced proportion of category 1 hazards in dwellings in the poorest performing areas, households and dwelling types	Overall condition is relatively good, though some disparities in performance exist between different areas and dwelling types	11,444 dwellings in the private sector have category 1 hazards (BRE 2015)	To maintain and where possible improve the levels
1	Increased public awareness of the range of services available to encourage and support owner occupiers	Many owner occupiers do not know what information and advice is available	Overall awareness of key services is low	Increase advice and information in the poorest performing areas in the city
1	Encourage and support greater access to home appreciation loans and equity release products to fund repairs and maintenance	Equity potential among owner occupied households is high. Attitudes to equity release for households in non-decent housing is encouraging	The Private Sector Assistance policy provides a safety net for vulnerable customers	To maintain the safety net for vulnerable customers who can not access a commercial loan
1	<b>Strategic Aim 2. Encourage, support and regulate private landlords and agents in providing provide safe and well managed properties free from category 1 hazards. Inform and support tenants around what they can expect.</b>			
1	<b>Partnerships: Higher York, Safer York Partnership, Independent Landlords, National Landlord Association, York Residential Landlord Association, Association Residential Letting Agents</b>			
1	<b>Objectives and outcomes</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target/date</b>
1	Encourage and support landlords and agents to reduce number of category 1 hazards in private rented homes with a particular focus on HMOs and poorest performing areas	Private rented sector is growing and the overall standards are worse. We need to ensure the sector is fit for purpose for years to come.	3,711 PRS dwellings have category 1 hazards (BRE 2015)	Reduce the gap between tenures and dwelling types by 2021

1	Consider the need to extend licensing of HMOs to smaller HMOs	Private rented sector is growing and the overall standards are worse. We need to ensure the sector is fit for purpose for years to come.	3,711 PRS dwellings have category 1 hazards (BRE 2015)	Reduce the gap between tenures and dwelling types by 2021
1	Improve the sector by ensuring that all landlords and agents have access to good quality training	Private rented sector is growing and the overall standards are worse. We need to ensure the sector is fit for purpose for years to come.	3,711 PRS dwellings have category 1 hazards (BRE 2015)	Reduce the gap between tenures and dwelling types by 2021
1	Regulate more robustly and take action against the worst landlords and agents	The majority of landlords and agents maintain a good standard of accommodation. However there are a very small number who flout the law	Given the growing importance of the sector we need to step up our approach to those landlords who do not respond to encouragement and support, and take action	Complete review of enforcement policy 2017.
1	<b>Actions towards this objective will include:</b>			
1	Increased awareness of tenants rights, responsibilities and support available	Lack of knowledge is the main cause of poorer standards in the private rented sector	85% of landlords own just 1 or 2 properties and lack of knowledge is the main cause of poorer standards	Annual landlords fair and private sector tenant event. Implement national 'tenants charter' and national code of conduct for landlords
1	<b>Strategic Aim 3. To enable people whose independence may be at risk safely remain in or return to their home</b>			
1	<b>Voluntary Sector, Citizen's Advice, Age UK, CCG, Be Independant, CYC Housing, CYC Adult Services, Ward members</b>			
1	<b>Objectives and outcomes</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target/date</b>
1	Reduce number of category 1 hazards relating to falls in households with older people/children with a focus on the worst performing areas	York has higher than the national average figures for vulnerable households living in, or returning to homes with category 1 hazards are more likely to be admitted/re-admitted to hospital.	7546 category 1 hazards that relate to falls	Reduce the number of category 1 hazards

1	Ensure that those who need adaptations to help them remain in or return to their accommodation receive the appropriate level of advice, support and assistance	To meet the growing demand of an ageing population and disabled children with complex needs	130-150 Disabled Facilities Grants 2015	Assist a minimum of 150 households access Disabled Facilities Grants per year
1	Increased awareness of the "stay at home services" available to support independence	To target older householders who are more at risk re services which would help them to remain at home	There are a range of services in place across the city provided by both CYC and the voluntary sector	To target the wards with greatest risk of falls and excess cold hazards
1	<b>Strategic Aim 4. Maximise use of the existing housing stock to increase the supply of decent affordable homes</b>			
1	<b>Homes and Loans Service, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, North Yorkshire Police, Homes and Communities Agency</b>			
1	<b>Objectives and outcomes</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target/date</b>
1	Maintain accurate information about the numbers of long-term empty Properties.	High housing demand so every property counts	194 long term empty properties 2014	Ongoing reduction in LTE properties by 2021
1	Encourage owners of privately owned empty homes to bring them back into use.	Empty homes are a waste of resources and by targetin empty homes it maxamises the new homes bonus nad increases the number of affordable homes in the city	xx households on the waiting list	To target 30 homes per year to brought back in to use
1	Target owners whose empty homes cause a significant detrimental impact to the neighbourhood	Empty homes can be a source of environmental nuisance, ASB and blight to neighbourhoods especially where long term empty homeowners have not engaged with the council	xxx homes have been identified as having a detrimental problem	To target these as part of the 30 homes per year to brought back in to use
1	Strengthen existing and develop new partnerships to reduce the number of long-term empty homes in particular above shops	To ensure that available space is used for housing and to help regenerate the city centre	Upper floors study suggest that there is about 360,000Sq ft of useable space which equates to 800 1 bedroom flats	To target these as part of the 30 homes per year to brought back in to use

1	Reduced proportion of under occupied private sector homes ( as part of the wider York Housing Strategy)	Very high levels of under occupation suggesting York is not making best use of its existing housing stock	77% under occupancy in 2008	Less than 77% under occupancy by 2021
1	<b>Strategic Aim 5. Enable more sustainable homes by increasing energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty</b>			
1	<b>Citizen's Advice, Better Homes York, CYC Housing and CYC Sustainability</b>			
1	<b>Objectives and outcomes</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Baseline position</b>	<b>Target/date</b>
1	Improve energy efficiency by targeting work in the worst performing areas and property types	The overall energy efficiency of dwellings in York is relatively high when compared to the national figure. overall energy efficiency is good some disparities in performance exist between areas.	Average SAP rating figure for owner occupied stock is 59 and for private rented stock it is 56 (BRE 2015)	All wards in line with the current city average SAP rating, which is 59, by 2021
1	Reduce fuel poverty by targeted work in the worst performing areas and property types	Fuel poverty in the city has doubled since 2008	15% of households living in the private sector are in fuel poverty (BRE, 2015)	All wards in line with current city average for fuel poverty by 2021
1	Maximise funding opportunities from LCR/YNYER/other partners	The overall energy efficiency in York is good, however there are some disparities in performance between areas of the city.	Average city wide energy efficiency rating (SAP) 59 in 2015 but some areas/sectors/house types showing poorer performance	To help a minimum of 200-400 homes/year improve the energy efficiency of their homes
1	<b>Partnerships</b>			
	Strong partnerships form the foundation of this strategy. It is important to maintain and develop regional partnerships, including in the Leeds City Region and North Yorkshire and East Riding and also local partnerships, including the Safer York Partnership, Age UK, Citizens Advice and the CCG.			
	This strategy will be shared and communicated to partners and potential partners to assist delivery of the strategy's aims.			



1

**Governance**

The steering group that developed this strategy will meet at least annually to review progress and ensure the strategy remains responsive to emerging needs.

We will produce a short annual report to be published on the council's website.

Within the action plan, the baseline position along with a target and date to be achieved accompanies each objective.

1

**Monitoring**

Within the action plan, the baseline position along with a target and date to be achieved accompanies each objective. This will be monitored through a performance monitoring and data reporting. There are also other performance indicators being monitored and ways of measuring the success of the strategy.

Satisfaction surveys with the adaptations and loans services

Monitoring of the Disabled Facilities Grant

HSSA - Annual return

Number of people taking up Better Homes/Collective Switch

Next BRE or stock condition survey

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**KEY:**

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