

Building Better

Housing Delivery Programme

Design Manual



Purpose of the guide

Good design is essential for communities to thrive. It creates pride in place, participation, healthy activity, self supporting communities, and safe and secure homes which improve educational attainment, mental wellbeing, low carbon lifestyles, and independence. The Housing Delivery Programme has the potential to deliver a wide reaching positive legacy for the city.

This design manual has been developed to ensure that we are both meeting our city's housing need and 'building better'. The guide provides both a strong and ambitious set of standards and a progressive and collaborative design approach which will ensure our existing communities positively influence the outcomes.

Our newly appointed architects, *Mikhail Riches*, have experience of delivering exemplary sustainable new communities without compromising financial viability. This guide, along with their appointment, offers us a rare opportunity to significantly raise the standards of residential place-making in York. We hope that our developments will raise expectations and inspire others to deliver better.

The standards have been developed to ensure quality is achieved, but a level of flexibility of application is needed based on the opportunities and constraints of each site within the Housing Delivery Programme.

This guide will form the basis of the strategic brief for the project manager and design team. It builds on the housing and wider social aspirations outlined within 'The Vision' of the Housing Delivery programme approved by Executive in July 2018. The guide also reflects best practice, guidance and policy, both local and national. The guide is formed of cross directorate collaboration lead by the Housing Delivery Team and is designed to work alongside existing council policies.

Meeting Housing need

We will...

- Deliver a minimum of 40% of affordable housing across the programme, including at least 20% social rent housing and opportunities for first time buyers and key workers to take their first step into home ownership
- Build all homes to Accessible/Adaptable dwelling standard*, meaning homes can more easily and affordably be adapted to accommodate the changing needs of their occupants
 - *broadly compatible with Lifetime Homes
- Deliver a variety of housing typologies providing choice for residents and reflecting local housing need
- Develop a comprehensive and diverse public engagement strategy which ensures that the local community is listened to and genuinely influences the design process
 - With targeted strategies to ensure the views of hard to reach groups and those with specialist housing need are heard
- Deliver housing that considers the ageing population and meets identified specialist need
 - e.g. fully wheelchair accessible homes, communal facilities for individuals with learning difficulties
- Explore opportunities for delivering self and community build homes, giving people a greater sense of control in providing a home which meets their needs
- Engage with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders such as Public Health and local health providers, local service providers, Housing Policy and Strategy, Adult Commissioning, Housing Adaptations, and Education, to ensure we fully understand the health and wellbeing needs of our communities before developing concept and detailed designs
- Identify need and develop homes which are technology ready, allowing people to live in their homes more comfortably and for longer

Creating and connecting communities

We will...

- Create distinctive new neighbourhoods informed by a thorough analysis of the physical, historic, and cultural context of the site
- Map local community infrastructure to create a clear understanding of how existing neighbourhoods work, such that our developments positively connect into, benefit from, and enhance the existing neighbourhood offer
 - Considering both physical and social assets e.g. leisure and sports facilities and voluntary sector groups
- Take opportunities to deliver additional community or commercial facilities as part of the developments, to add vibrancy to the neighbourhoods
- Provide high quality and accessible open space and public realm, which is well-considered, reflects local need and aspirations, and encourages communities to come together
- Provide opportunities for communal gardens and food growing areas such as urban orchards, allotments, and wildlife habitats
- Provide inclusive formal and informal play opportunities which meet the needs of children of a range of ages and abilities, including play streets which maximise provision of play close to home.
- Deliver schemes which are tenure blind, helping to promote inclusive communities
- Consider potential 'meanwhile' uses for sites, benefiting the community and / or the local economy
- Actively support digital inclusion, providing opportunities for improved economic, health and social outcomes for our residents, whilst recognising that online services are not always appropriate for everyone

Sustainable Development

In keeping with the Council's commitment to deliver a zero carbon city by 2030, we will build low energy neighbourhoods based on a fabric first approach to development. We will follow the rigorous design and construction approach outlined below to minimise the environmental impact of our new homes and ensure exceptionally low energy bills for all new occupants.

We will...

- Build all new housing on our larger sites to certified Passivhaus standards to maximise energy efficiency and provide the most effective route to zero carbon through minimising energy needs
- Install the most appropriate renewables to further minimise bills for residents helping to tackle fuel poverty
- Consider co-owned solar PV systems on appropriate sites which maximise the direct use of generated energy
- Specify materials, taking account of both their carbon footprint and their ease of use, maintenance and replacement, ensuring our homes are environmentally friendly and affordable to live in for the long term
- Carry out post-occupancy monitoring on a percentage of the completed dwellings in partnership with a local academic institution to ensure there is no performance gap between design and build and to assess how best to benefit from living in low carbon housing
- Reduce water usage within homes and the wider development through carefully specified internal fittings and Sustainable Urban Drainage systems
- Develop a site waste management plan (SWMP) before construction begins, which sets out how materials will be managed efficiently and disposed of during the construction of the works, maximising the re-use and recycling of materials
- Monitor the amount of waste generated during construction and the % of construction waste recycled or reused and review the SWMP to see where improvements can be made on future schemes
- Actively engage with local construction training providers to help improve local skills levels in sustainable design and construction and use local contractors wherever possible

Annex 1

- Promote recycling through well designed and integrated areas to store recycling boxes and bins which facilitate easy collection

Active and sustainable travel

We will...

- Look beyond our site boundary and take opportunities to better connect people to local facilities encouraging sustainable transport choice
- Create strong connections between our site and existing footpaths and cycle networks, particularly where there is potential to strengthen routes to open space, play opportunities and other community assets and services
- Create developments which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists including designing to very low speeds using Home Zone principles and car-free streets suitable for play and socialising
- Accelerate the transition from petrol to electric car use through the provision of electric car charging points for every household
- Encourage sustainable transport choices by making suitable investments in improving access and usage of public transport e.g. upgrading local bus stops
- Provide secure, covered cycle storage that meets the following levels as a minimum:
 - Two cycle spaces per 1 bedroom dwelling
 - A minimum of one additional space per bedroom
 - At least four short stay cycle spaces per development, plus an additional 1 space per 40 homes
- Design developments to minimise cars on streets and encourage sustainable transport. Overall parking ratios of less than 1 per dwelling will be sought in locations with good access to sustainable transport, with the provision of access to a car club, car-sharing and communal delivery points an integral part of the development. Maximum car parking ratios will be:
 - No more than one car parking space per 1 or 2 bedroom dwelling
 - No more than two spaces per three of more bedroom dwelling
- Design developments which limit on street parking, creating streets for people, play and socialising

Healthy place-making

We will...

- Build all of our homes to National Space Standards as a minimum, create comfortable and spacious homes, use large windows and taller ceiling heights to ensure our homes are naturally light and bright
- Design homes with consideration for how current and future generations wish to inhabit and enjoy their homes, providing flexibility in lifestyle choice, promoting independence, and reflecting the growth in multi-generational living
- Aim to incorporate private outdoor spaces and transitional spaces such as garden terraces, roof gardens and garden rooms
- Enable our communities to enjoy nature, by providing high quality open space and pursuing opportunities to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of our sites
- Evaluate individuals' experience of their new homes and communities, and apply this knowledge to future schemes, in order to deliver the best schemes we can
- Deliver high quality communal and public open space, providing a shared community focus, whose success will be measured by its usage rather than its size
- Create new developments which are neighbourly and encourage social interaction inside and outside of the home
- Improve air quality and support mental health through planting, incorporating seasonal variation and creating dementia friendly gardens with species selected which will thrive in a changing climate
- Look to engage with local craftspeople to elevate the quality of our homes and increase the sense of pride in the new communities
- Provide indoor and outdoor places and spaces that support a reduction in health inequalities and promote the wellbeing of our residents
- Protect and enhance the ecological value of our sites