

# Housing in Newcastle upon Tyne

**Brian O'Doherty**  
**Head of Housing Development and**  
**Partnership Management**  
**Newcastle City Council**

December 2009

# The overall purpose of the refresh, therefore, is to:

- Provide an update of the 2006 Housing Strategy
- Respond to major changes in the housing market
- Show how housing contributes to the delivery of Newcastle's Sustainable Community Strategy ("SCS")
- Take account of significant policy initiatives at national, regional and city level
- Refresh our plan of action

# To achieve its aim and to present actions in a user friendly format the refresh sets out:

- 1. *The wider role of housing in supporting communities*** - Working with the grain of community life to close the gap between the city's different areas, whilst supporting different ways of living and stages of life
- 2. *Managing housing need and demand by making the best use of existing housing*** – Making the most of existing homes via improved access or regeneration to facilitate a better match with housing needs and demand. Build on what works eg Prevention from Eviction
- 3. *Increasing housing options*** – Building high quality, environmentally sustainable new housing for growth and choice. Increasing access to private rented accommodation.

# The housing market

Since Newcastle's 2006 Housing Strategy the UK (and the global) economy has received an unprecedented series of shocks, the scale, nature and consequences of which are still not fully understood.

For housing this has meant:

- A fall in house prices
- Sales lower than at any time since records began
- New starts at the lowest peacetime level since the 1920s
- Loans to first-time buyers at the lowest ever recorded (Roof, 2009)

Newcastle's housing market has not escaped the downturn. Market activity has fallen significantly:

- House moves are down two-thirds on last year
- New houses completed are down by one third
- New houses started are down to a quarter of the figure a year ago (NCC, 2009)

# Policy

**At the same time, the policy demands on housing have increased. Nationally, the government has called for:**

- **A step change in the delivery of new homes – 2 million from 2008 to 2016, with a further 1 million carbon neutral homes by 2020**
- **A new expanded role for social housing – up to 70,000 new homes**
- **Higher design and environmental standards**
- **New governance arrangements for the funding of social housing through the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and its regulation through the Tenant Services Authority (TSA)**
- **A greater emphasis on making better use of existing housing**
- **Better engagement on identifying priorities via the Home and Community agency's 'Single Conversation'**

**But housing should contribute to the government's and the council's overall agenda as laid down by the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). Growth has been the priority, but not for growth's sake – growth that supports other ambitions for our communities:-**

- **design must help deliver reductions in carbon emissions;**
- **the mix of different types of housing must support balanced communities;**
- **housing and support must promote individual independence;**
- **the housing “offer” must promote quality of place and economic growth.**
- **the housing offer should also contribute to promoting health and well being eg promoting access to training and employment**

## **Summary highlights the role of housing in relation to:**

- **Supporting the strengthening the city's different neighbourhoods**
- **Supporting mixed communities and different stages of life**
- **Helping people to access and sustain employment**
- **Managing environmental impact**
- **We are now planning to develop a joint Housing Strategy with Gateshead**

# **Strategic Theme One: *The wider role of housing in the community***

## **Overview of key priorities:**

- **Supporting and strengthening the City's different neighbourhoods**
- **Supporting mixed communities and different stages of life**
- **Helping people access and sustain employment**
- **Managing environmental impact**

# ***Strategic Theme Two: Managing housing need and demand by making the best use of existing homes***

## ***Overview of key priorities:***

- ***Preventing homelessness***
- ***Getting the most from private housing***
- ***Helping people to access housing and stay in their own home***

# **Strategic Housing Theme Three: *Increasing housing choice***

## ***Overview of key priorities:***

- **Facilitating new housing building**
- **Enabling new affordable homes**
- **Extending the role of Your Homes Newcastle**

**The Council is an active partner in the Tyne and Wear Housing Partnership and we will be working with this partnership to ensure effective links with all sectors**

- **Completing an assessment of the Tyne and Wear Housing Market**
- **Helping revise the Regional Housing Strategy and developing a Sub-Regional Housing Strategy**

**New strategy will provide a basis to change the manner in which housing initiatives are instigated**

**New strategy will adopt a whole market, whole city approach to have a sustained impact on housing market across the city with monitoring and review arrangements in respect of:**

- **The action plan**
- **Outcomes**
- **The housing market**
- **Stakeholder and community engagement**

# Pilot project – Urban Village

based on Common Ground from New York

Newcastle identified by CLG as best place in North East

**Social cohesion – Environmental – Economic Regeneration**

- **A mixed community of people who need help to access the housing market**
  - People who have been homeless, graduates, artists, business start up, actors – urban people
- **A stunning building – highest environmental standards**
  - Must have a wow factor – to regenerate people and localities – a place of change
- **A symbolic venture – demonstrates commitment to a diverse economy and community**
  - Self build and training – links to Universities – ONE

# **In summary**

**We have LAP's for what we are already doing and will then develop on URBACT related LAP based on what we learn from our partners.**