



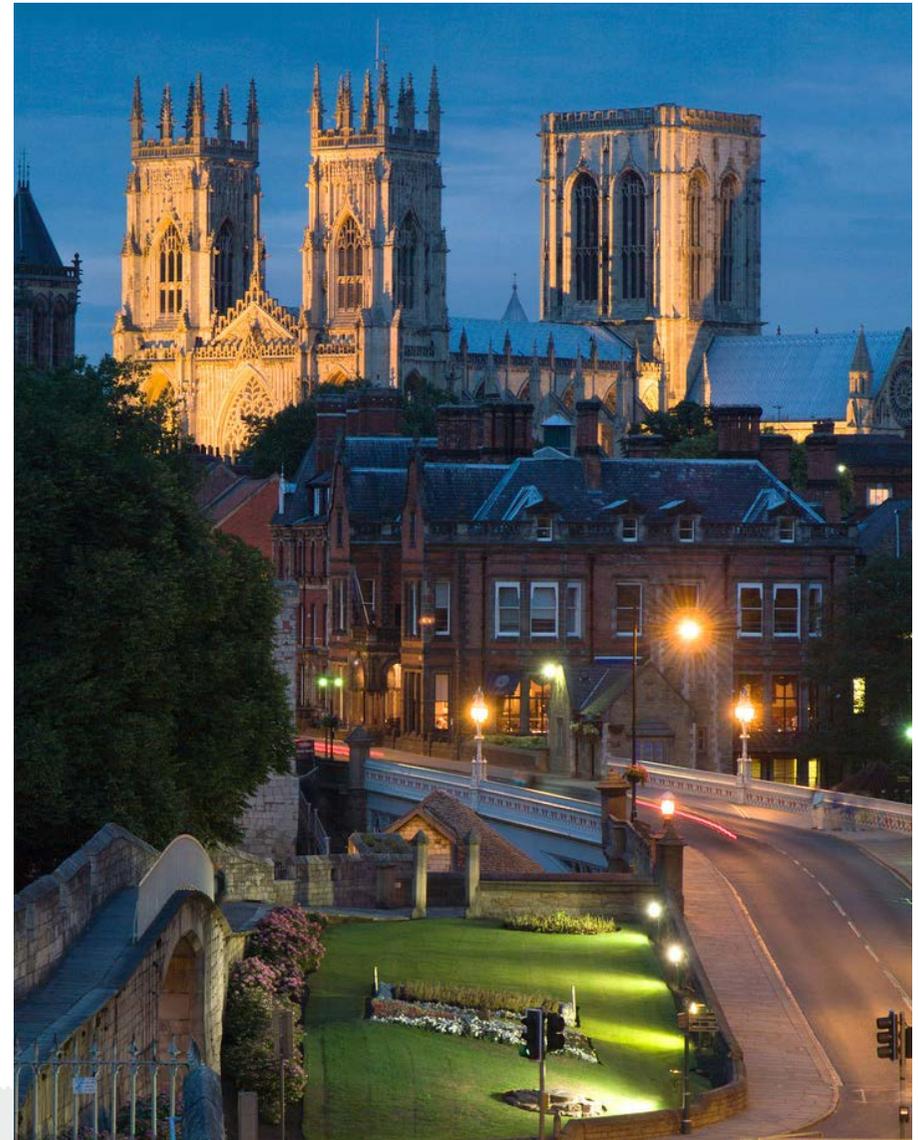
City of York Council

Housing Charter



Contents

Introduction to us	3
Introduction to the charter	4
Our Vision and Mission Statement	5
Our Values	6
Our Priorities	12
We Think Forward	13
We Think Together	17
We Think Community	20
We Think Home	24
We Think You	28



Introduction to us

We are the Housing Services team and work across all areas of housing in the city. We:

- **Advise and assist residents with options for housing and work to prevent homelessness**
- **Support our tenants to maintain their tenancies and live independently**
- **Build new affordable homes: for social rent and homes for shared ownership**
- **Repair, maintain and improve our council homes**
- **Engage and work with residents to improve services**



Introduction to the charter

Housing Services' Charter – this booklet outlines the way we deliver our services, our aims and ambitions. The charter is the first step in improving the way we work with you, and making clear what you can expect from the housing service.

To produce the charter we consulted with you, colleagues and partners through a series of workshops, surveys, panels and meetings. We asked what a good housing service looks like, and this is what you told us:

- **Professional, well trained, and compassionate staff with the right skills and attitude**
- **A non-judgmental service that listens to tenants and has their best interests at the centre of all they do**
- **Works in partnership with other services**
- **Services that are easy to access**
- **Delivers and sets the standard for safe, secure and efficient council homes**
- **Has the capacity to meet demand**

We also took into consideration a number of other important things including City of York Council's 2019-2023 plan, budgets, the rising cost of living, impact of the pandemic, the Government's Social Housing White Paper, other legal changes and the need to provide more online information and services to make them easier to access at all times of the day.

We have developed a series of goals each with a plan of how we will achieve them. Some of these we are already working towards and some we will begin shortly.

If you have any comments on, or require any further information about, the Housing Services' Charter, please email housing.serviceimprovements@york.gov.uk

Our Vision



Our Mission Statement

We are **ONE TEAM**, working with you in positive and responsive ways, always listening and improving our services.

We invest in, and plan for the future, ensuring we support safe, sustainable, affordable and good quality homes.

Working with residents, other parts of the council and external organisations, we aim to support strong and diverse communities where you can live well and thrive.

WE THINK

WE THINK
FORWARD



WE THINK
YOU



WE THINK
TOGETHER



WE THINK
HOME



WE THINK
COMMUNITY





- We strive to reduce carbon emissions from homes and reduce energy bills
- We continue to invest in ICT (Information and Communications Technology e.g. the new Open Housing system)
- We work to ensure your home, and our services, are fit for the future and meet the needs of our residents
- We improve by asking you for your feedback and using it to make our services better



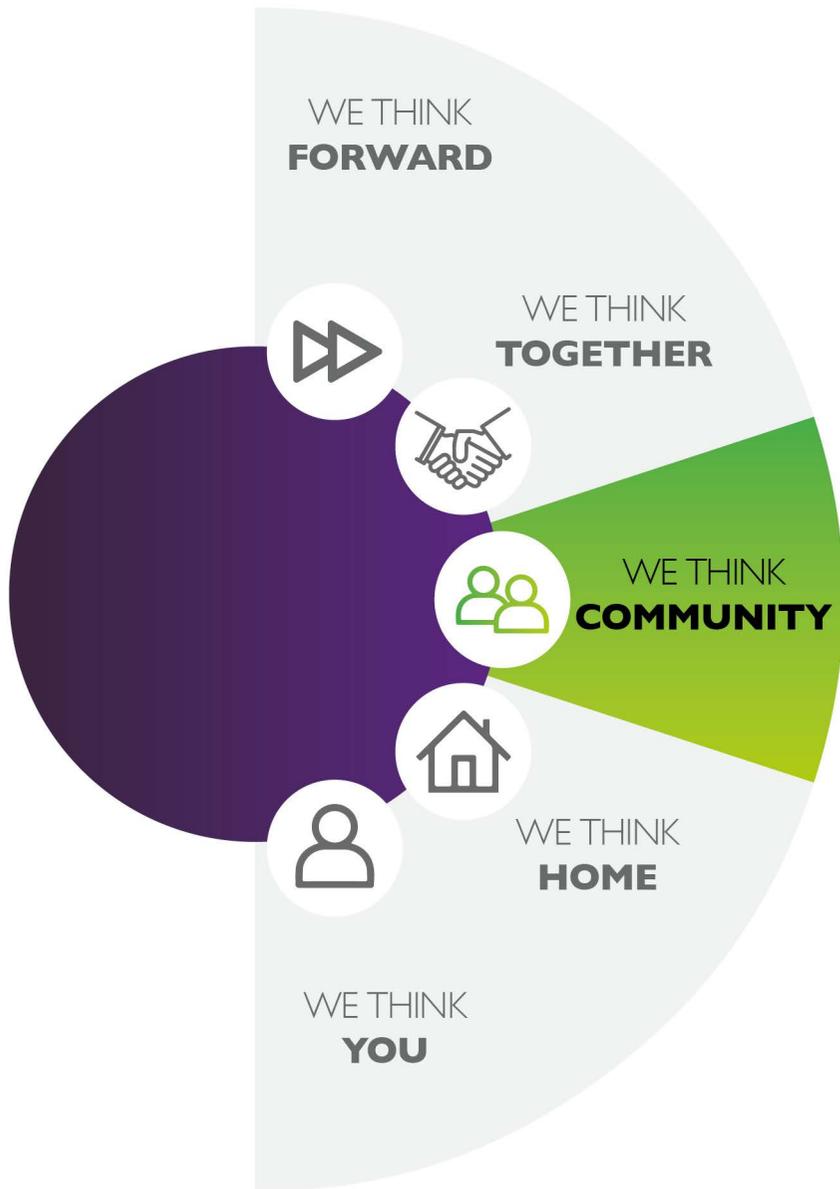
Energy efficiency being carried out in your homes



- We work as one team to deliver the best possible service to you, our customers
- We work with you and our partners to ensure views and needs are incorporated into housing developments
- We ensure staff and our residents work together to help shape and improve future services



As part of the city's Community Safety Hub, council and police officers work together to tackle challenges like anti-social behaviour.



- We work, and engage effectively and imaginatively, with the community
- We collaborate with internal partners and other organisations to create the networks and connections needed to help you lead a good life
- We provide green, safe, healthy, and attractive indoor and outdoor communal spaces which encourage community activities
- We support you to access training to allow you and your communities to prosper



Our Independent Living Community at Marjorie Waite Court has a community cafe



- We think homes are more than bricks and mortar. We listen and work with you to make your house a home
- We provide accessible information, tailored and flexible support to enable you to thrive in your home
- We invest in your homes to make sure they are well maintained, safe and warm
- We build homes to meet a variety of needs



Lowfield Green – a recent housing development for tenants, shared owners and owner occupiers



- We use a variety of ways to listen, communicate and engage with you
- We support you to live as independently as possible in your own home – as you have told us this is important to you
- We provide you with a personalised service
- We empower our professional and motivated staff, developing their skills and enriching the values and culture across the workforce



A Lowfield Green resident happy in her new home

City of York Council's priorities

City of York Council's plan focuses on 8 key priorities to improve the quality of life for all residents and to enhance the way we work. They are:

- good health and wellbeing
- a greener and cleaner city
- well paid jobs and an inclusive economy
- creating homes and world-class infrastructure
- getting around sustainably
- safe communities and culture for all
- a better start for children and young people
- an open and effective council

The following action plan has a colour coded key which demonstrates how Housing Services' goals link to the council's priorities above.



Goal: We strive to reduce carbon emissions from homes and reduce energy bills



How we will achieve this:

- Secure government funding for programmes to reduce carbon emissions from your home and make your home warmer
- Identify homes with the highest need for, and install energy efficient measures
- Identify and tackle sources of fuel poverty and incorporate ways to help reduce these in our new-build homes
- Work with partners such as the Building Research Establishment to produce data and develop a Housing Retrofit Action Plan
- Work with partners such as York Energy Advice to ensure that we continue to help those most in need
- Work together with housing associations to find joined up solutions to help residents in the city benefit from warmer and more comfortable homes

How we will measure progress:

- Number of homes improved
- Energy bills reduced through customer feedback
- Number of measures installed
- Amount of carbon savings
- Produce and publish a Retrofit Action Plan setting out our priorities



Lowfield Green, home to contemporary, sustainable living



Goal: We continue to invest in ICT (Information and Communications Technology e.g. the new Open Housing system)



How we will achieve this:

- Continue to develop our Open Housing ICT system
- Identify new technologies to help you access our services, live well and independently for as long as possible
- Improve the information and the way and the way you navigate our website
- Install wi-fi and upgrade Telecare in all of our Independent Living Communities

How we will measure progress:

- Monitoring your levels of satisfaction and staff feedback
- Compare our services with other housing providers
- Collect feedback from you, monitor how much the information on www.york.gov.uk is being used, monitor complaints and feedback from a variety of sources including tenant panels
- Monitor the impact of upgrading our wi-fi and Telecare services



Welcome to OPENAccess

In this area of the site you can:

- View your tenancy details and amend your contact information
- View your rent account statements
- Browse and register your interest in available properties

Existing users can login [here](#).

If you haven't already registered (or have forgotten your login details) you can enter your details [here](#) to gain immediate access.

Open Housing offers you 24/7 access to details about your tenancy



Goal: We work to ensure your home, and our services, are fit for the future and meet the needs of our residents



How we will achieve this:

- Review services and homes to ensure they meet the new decent homes standards
- Ensure your views are incorporated into new contracts for major building works
- Review all the ways you can access the housing support you need

How we will measure progress:

- Review services performance and ensure we are prepared for inspection
- Customer feedback
- Implement your feedback from our review of housing support



Marjorie Waite Court offers independent living with care



Goal: We improve by asking you for your feedback and using it to make our services better

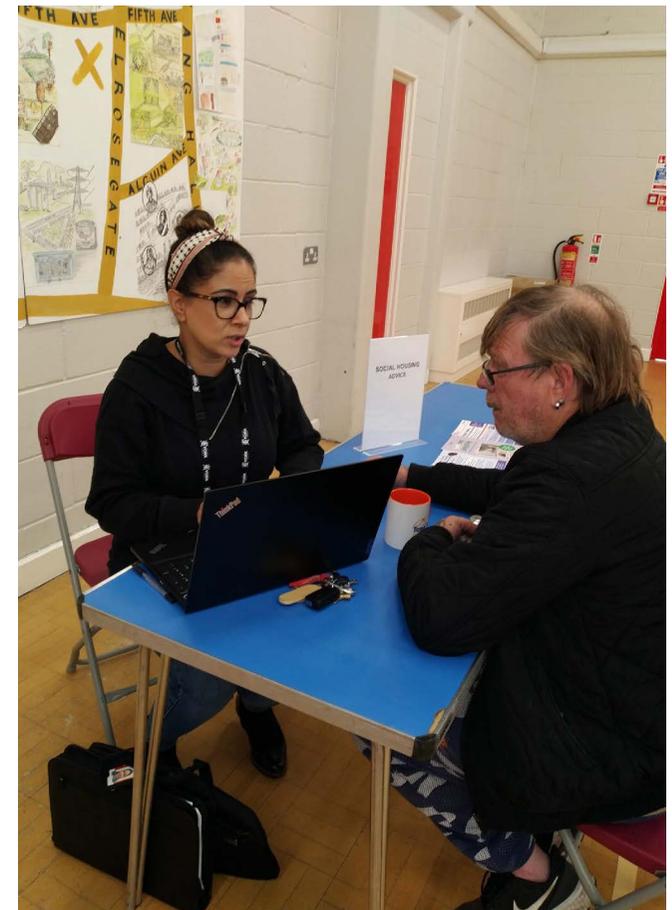


How we will achieve this:

- Adopt and embed the Housing Services Charter to give staff clear direction and you clear expectations
- Use data and forecasting to inform our investment in our properties and services
- Develop our performance framework and make this widely available to increase accountability
- Carry out effective and meaningful consultation and work with partners and other stakeholders, while sharing best practice
- Pilot new support roles to help to help you with extra support needs
- Support staff to make decisions which will achieve the best outcome for you

How we will measure progress:

- Launch and embed the Housing Charter by May 2023
- By noting the levels of satisfaction with Housing Services that is given in surveys and other feedback
- Produce and publish our performance data
- Embed engagement in our culture and practice
- Review pilot of housing management support roles
- Review case studies, monitor complaints and compliments



WE THINK **TOGETHER**



Goal: We work as one team to deliver the best possible service to you, our customers



How we will achieve this:

- Work with the community and partners to support homes being built by the community and self-build housing
- Work with partners and stakeholders to review the services offered to those in need, and support you to remain independent in your home
- If you're homeless, support you into permanent accommodation
- Work with staff to develop better team working
- Work with partners and others to raise standards in the private rented homes

How we will measure progress:

- Numbers of self-build homes completed and numbers of homes built by community groups
- Feedback from you, staff and the wider community
- Working with staff groups to develop team charters and to encourage feedback from staff groups



Colleagues across different departments work together to improve services

WE THINK **TOGETHER**



Goal: We work with you and our partners to ensure views and needs are incorporated into housing developments



How we will achieve this:

- Work with partners and you to deliver new homes through our Housing Delivery Programme
- Work with other partners to design housing to meet your different needs

How we will measure progress:

- Completion of new homes for open market sale, shared ownership, and social rented properties
- Completion of alternative types of housing to meet different needs



We worked with residents and others to co-design new housing to be built at Ordnance Lane

WE THINK **TOGETHER**



Goal: We ensure staff and our residents work together to help shape and improve future services



How we will achieve this:

- Meet you at tenants' scrutiny and performance panels, and improve and shape services together
- Staff meetings to discuss new ways of working to bring efficiencies and benefits to you



Working together to provide the best services for you

How we will measure progress:

- Measure attendance at and contributions to residents' meeting/ sessions, and improvements to services through the 'You said, we did' programme
- Staff satisfaction surveys. Attendance at meetings / sessions, changes to services and feedback to our staff group, Team Voice

WE THINK **COMMUNITY**



Goal: We work, and engage effectively and imaginatively, with the community



How we will achieve this:

- Ensure that the engagement action plan is reviewed and implemented
- Involve you in the development of the Tenants' Choice and Standing Water Project contracts
- Refresh the tenants' satisfaction survey in line with the Social Housing White Paper requirements
- Review your use and views of the Open Housing ICT customer portal
- Increase use of social media



Tenant volunteers help to build pride in our communities

How we will measure progress:

- Progress will be measured against the engagement action plan
- Satisfaction with these major works programmes
- Response rate to the satisfaction survey
- Greater take up and use of Open Housing customer portal
- Number of followers, comments, likes and use of different social media



Volunteers making a difference in the community

WE THINK **COMMUNITY**



Goal: We collaborate with internal partners and other organisations to create the networks and connections needed to help you lead a good life



How we will achieve this:

- Work with partners to raise awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, and strengthen the support for those who have experienced it
- Work with partners to provide the best possible care and safeguarding for children in York
- Collaborate with other agencies to address issues relating to fuel poverty
- Collaborate with other agencies and partners to improve the standard and quality of homes
- Roll out an equalities training programme to all staff including a LGBT+ course

How we will measure progress:

- Review current processes and measure training completed
- Minimise the effect of the increase in the cost-of-living prices and minimise the impact of fuel poverty on residents
- Monitor staff learning plans and discussions at monthly reviews



New facilities help bring families together and engage with their communities

WE THINK **COMMUNITY**



Goal: We provide green, safe, healthy and attractive indoor and outdoor communal spaces which encourage community activities



How we will achieve this:

- Review how our communal areas could be better used
- Review of the Housing Estate Improvement Programme process

How we will measure progress:

- Through our tenant satisfaction surveys
- Through the Housing Estate Inspection programme review, processes updated and implemented



Volunteers help out in our communal gardens

WE THINK **COMMUNITY**



Goal: We support you to access training to allow you and your communities to prosper

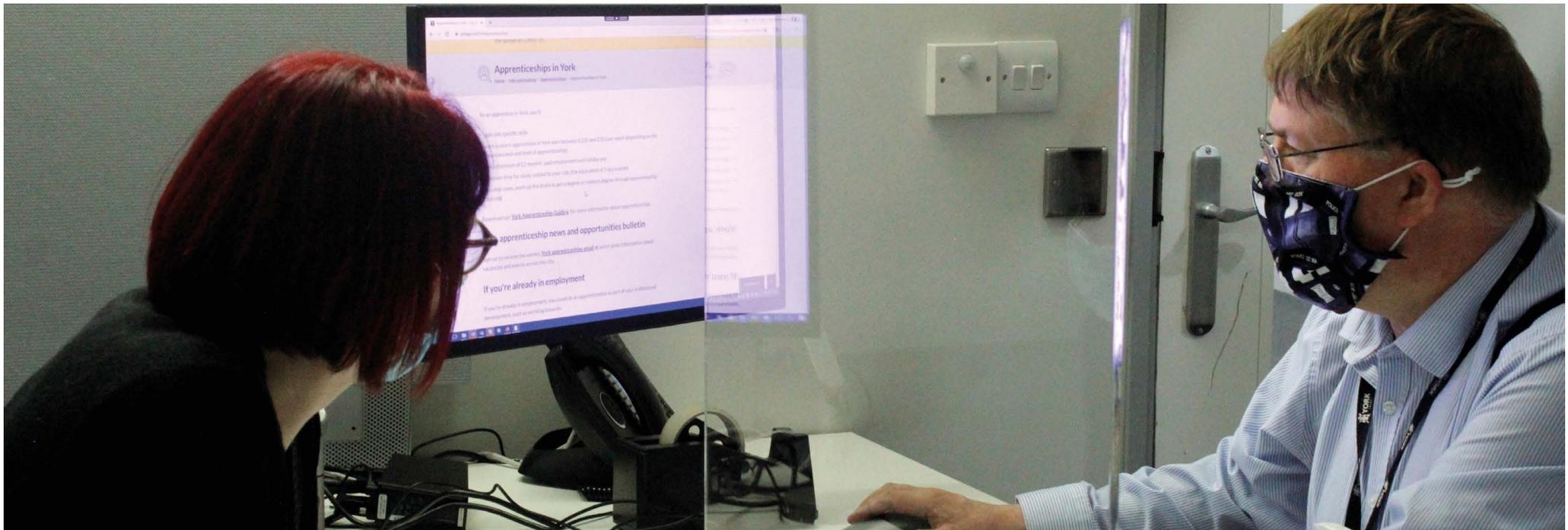


How we will achieve this:

- Develop and implement a training programme together with other organisations, to enable you to learn new skills and further improve your employment opportunities

How we will measure progress:

- By assessing feedback from you, completing programmes and measuring employment gained



Helping you to gain new skills



**Goal: We think homes are more than bricks and mortar.
We listen and work with you to make your house a home**



How we will achieve this:

- Review the council's empty homes process to ensure council homes are let quickly and to a good standard
- Use your feedback to inform our procurement of major works contractors
- Introduce a York-only choice-based lettings system

How we will measure progress:

- Reducing re-let times, measuring performance and your satisfaction levels
- Better levels of satisfaction with our major works contractors
- Roll out new lettings system



We make your house a home



Goal: We provide accessible information, tailored and flexible support, to enable you to thrive in your home



How we will achieve this:

- Provide up to date information at www.york.gov.uk/Housing
- Establish new social media platforms to connect with you and share information

How we will measure progress:

- Feedback from you
- Increased use of our web pages
- Introduce new social media such as Instagram and encourage more followers to our Facebook page



Making our services and information more accessible to all



Goal: We invest in your homes to make sure they are well maintained, safe and warm



How we will achieve this:

- Survey and update our information on our homes so we can best target our investment
- Refurbish and add energy improvements to apartments in Bell Farm
- Bid for government funding for energy efficiency measures to support you to live in warm homes

How we will measure progress:

- Produce an action plan for how we will invest in properties
- Use new Parity Projects / Building Research Establishment evidence to target improvements and energy efficiency measures to council and private homes
- Completing the refurbishment of homes in Bell Farm
- Deliver government-funded projects



Working across all sectors in York to provide safe, good quality homes



Goal: We build homes to meet a variety of needs



How we will achieve this:

- Continue to build homes for social rent (council housing), low-cost home ownership and market sale
- Increase the provision of community and self-build opportunities
- Providing second-hand shared ownership homes
- Delivering homes where extra support is provided
- Ensuring that, where possible, new homes are accessible for all

How we will measure progress:

- Completion of new build homes
- Monitoring satisfaction levels



Providing affordable and energy-efficient homes at Duncombe Barracks

WE THINK YOU



Goal: We use a variety of ways to listen, communicate and engage with you

How we will achieve this:

- Develop a communication plan for you and staff
- Develop additional web and social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram
- Review and consult on our engagement strategy, to encourage you to get involved

How we will measure progress:

- Completing a communication plan, and feedback from staff and you
- Completing our review of www.york.gov.uk and introducing new social media
- Numbers of you involved with our panels and customers volunteering to give feedback



We listen, communicate and engage with you in various ways

WE THINK YOU



Goal: We support you to live as independently as possible in your own home – as you have told us this is important to you



How we will achieve this:

- Continue the work of the Healthy and Sustainable Homes service
- Continue the work of the older persons' accommodation project

How we will measure progress:

- Measure the use of Healthy and Sustainable Homes service and its impact on enabling you to stay in your home
- Completion of Marjorie Waite Court and the refurbishment of Glen Lodge



Residents enjoying life at one of our Independent Living Communities

WE THINK YOU



Goal: We provide you with a personalised service

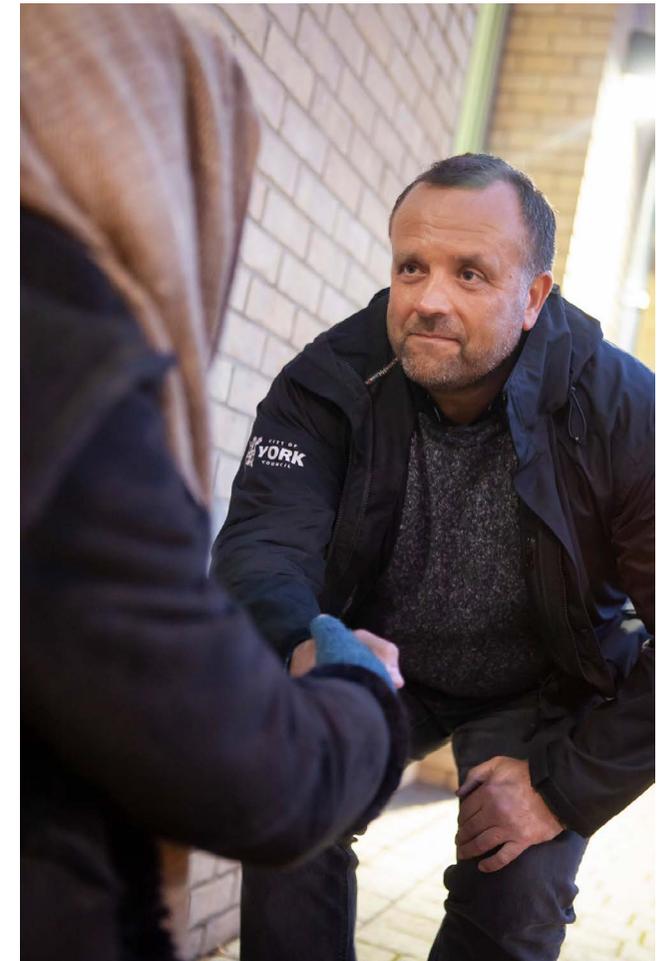


How we will achieve this:

- Develop and support a flexible approach that delivers the best outcome for you
- Review the role of the Housing Management Officer (HMO)
- Build on our relationships with you and treat you with fairness, courtesy and respect

How we will measure progress:

- Satisfaction measures
- Feedback on our new housing management roles
- Complaints and compliments
- Successful introductory period and sustainment of secure tenancies



Engaging with you



Goal: We empower our professional and motivated staff, developing their skills and enriching the values and culture across the workforce



How we will achieve this:

- Staff charters to be developed with our staff group, Team Voice, to build on our values
- Develop our training offer to you and our staff
- Improve our monitoring of staff performance

How we will measure progress:

- Look at staff satisfaction levels and performance to ensure better retention and recruitment of staff
- Train and support our staff
- Ensure staff meet all performance measures and goals



Providing a personalised service

If you require this document in an alternative format,
please email ycc@york.gov.uk or call 01904 551550

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