

***A shared vision, a single voice for housing in
Cumbria***

Cumbria Housing Statement 2017

Updated October 2017



The Cumbria Housing Group is made up of the six district housing authorities, Cumbria County Council and the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authorities.

Introduction

This Statement has been produced by the Cumbria Housing Group. By working together with our wider partnerships, including the private and housing association sectors and the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, we can add real value to creating and sustaining homes and communities across Cumbria that drives economic development and meets social needs.

The shared vision for housing in Cumbria is:

“Working together to drive housing and economic growth, regenerate poor housing and help people to live independently.”

This document has been produced to give a clear focus to housing priorities in Cumbria to support investment and other funding opportunities that will add value to make a real difference. Whilst the Statement looks ahead as far as 2030, it will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Cumbria in Brief

Cumbria is England’s second largest county. It contains the Lake District National Park, part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and other areas of outstanding natural beauty. It has population of approximately half a million people and is the third sparsest county nationally. Cumbria has a rapidly aging population. Over 60% of wards in Cumbria are classified as rural, and over half of the population live in rural communities. The City of Carlisle is the largest settlement and County Town.

Whilst Cumbria has significant investment and growth potential, at present, the median household income is just over £26,000; approximately £3,500 below the national average. The median house price is just under £145,000; well below the national average of £186,000. However in certain parts of the County, such as the Lake District, prices far exceed the national average and affordability is a major problem – house prices can be more than ten times local incomes. However the County also contains large areas (mainly urban) of deprivation, for example Barrow falls within the 10% most deprived nationally for overall deprivation.

The Cumbria economy is expected to see significant growth over the coming years with £25bn of investment anticipated in the next 10 years for projects in West Cumbria and Furness alone.

Priorities

We have identified three priorities where the Cumbria Housing Group feels that we can add value and make a difference.

Housing Growth, Affordability and Community Sustainability

Housing is a cornerstone of Cumbria's economic ambitions. Investment and growth will bring many more people into the County. Employers need to be able to attract and retain talent. This means that affordable housing is needed for employees and to enable young people to take up jobs locally. It also means that high quality market housing is needed to attract skilled people to come and work in Cumbria, generating wealth, spending to sustain and develop our local services and town centres.

We want to accelerate the rate of housing growth which drives a growing economy where affordable and market housing, both urban and rural, are delivered. By working collectively we want to increase the rate of current housing growth, particularly where major economic investment is expected along the M6 corridor, NuGen in West Cumbria and BAE Systems in Furness.

We want to enable delivery of a range of affordable housing and community-led housing to meet local evidenced needs, both for sale and rent, in urban and rural locations.

We want new energy-efficient housing to play a key role in creating and sustaining communities where housing imbalances are addressed; and enabling the delivery and retention of services and infrastructure.

Priority sites:

St Cuthbert's Garden Village (10,000)
Harker, Carlisle (300)
Croftlands, Ulverston (1000)
Marina Village, Barrow (650)
Broad Location, NE Kendal (400)
North of Beacon Edge, Penrith (9,000)
Corus Site, Workington (600)
Derwent Forest, Allerdale (200)
Harras Moor, Whitehaven (400)
Mirehouse, Copeland (1,000)
Whitehaven North (200)

What we want to deliver:

- 33,020 new homes, including 8,800 new affordable homes (with a range of rent and sale options), by 2030
- This will lead to 3,634 direct jobs, support a further 6,700 indirect jobs and 291 apprenticeships

Figures taken from 'The Economic Benefits of delivering new homes in Cumbria over 15 years' infographic (Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners) 2015

Housing Regeneration

We will collectively explore opportunities and initiatives with partners to increase choice, access and improve the quality of housing. Working collaboratively with landlords, enforcing housing standards where necessary, we will ensure that housing across Cumbria is of a good standard, warm safe and decent. Regenerating our poorest housing and town centres will improve the quality of housing and increase choice and demand in these areas. We want to bring empty homes back into beneficial use and improve the energy efficiency of homes. We also want mechanisms established to ensure that second homes/holiday homes do not dominate local housing markets to help sustain our communities, particularly in rural areas.

What we want to deliver:

- A Private Rented Sector that is warm, safe and which meets minimum housing standards
- A significant reduction in the number of long-term empty homes
- Home energy efficiency improvements
- Regeneration of housing areas to drive economic growth

Supporting Independent Living

Poor quality neighbourhoods and housing conditions, and at its extreme, homelessness, can contribute to a range of health conditions. These all have a long term impact on particularly vulnerable people, with consequential impacts for acute hospital services, adult social care and children and young people's life chances and employment prospects because of the effect on learning and education.

For Cumbria to grow the skills of its workforce, we will work with partners to ensure that the most vulnerable people in Cumbria can share the benefits of economic growth and access safe, warm affordable housing with the support they need

We want to deliver better designed housing that can be easily adapted to meet the life changes of occupiers to enable them to live independently.

What we want to deliver:

- A programme of new extra care housing
- Better designed housing that can be more easily adapted over the lifetime of the occupier
- Greater efficiency and value for money in delivering Disabled Facilities Grants
- The prevention of homelessness wherever possible

Our Approach

We will:

- Actively encourage more investment in housing, particularly from the private sector, and promoting the economic benefits
- Work together to access funding opportunities
- Work with Government to help deliver our priorities and, where appropriate, national priorities such as housing growth
- Be opportunistic, innovative and flexible in our approach to solving problems
- Speak with a single voice to deliver our priorities
- Celebrate our successes and our ability to deliver
- Influence at a local and national level to deliver our priorities
- Promote the economic benefits of housing delivery
- Work with Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership to ensure 'Housing' is given a higher profile on the political agenda
- Produce action plans to manage delivery

Key successes since the publication of the first Cumbria Housing Statement in October 2016:

- £4.3m secured for delivery of new community-led homes and joint actions agreed
- Completion of 1570 new homes in 2016/17 (including 382 affordable homes)
- Completion of the Cumbria Central Heating Scheme
- Cumbria extra care housing framework introduced and a pipeline of schemes put in place
- Cumbria DFG procurement framework completed and implemented
- New DFG policies introduced in several Districts to increase demand
- A successful funding bid has secured £730k over 2 years to increase specialist accommodation-based support and services for people suffering domestic abuse, across the County. The funding will be used to enhance crisis and preventative services; and meet the strategic priorities within HM Government Ending Violence against women and girls 2016-20, and local Homelessness Strategies.