

Press release:

Strategy will Support an Age Friendly North

The Northern Housing Consortium (NHC) today welcomed the publication of CLG's strategy '*Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods*' as a very positive step towards delivering services, homes and neighbourhoods which are inclusive and can meet the needs, aspirations and, importantly, the changing lifestyles of older people.

The north's population is ageing, driven by rising longevity; the ageing of the baby-boomers; low immigration from overseas, and a net loss of young adults to the rest of the UK. The projected percentage growth in households aged 65+ will increase dramatically across the north but most noticeably in the north east, and we know that future housing markets will be driven by older, single households particularly in the oldest cohorts of the population. Sarah Taylor, Policy & Practice Development Manager for the NHC, commented, "We are delighted that the strategy makes a commitment to the development of lifetime homes and neighbourhoods and supports the further integration of housing, health and care. We need to act now and get this right - clearly there are challenges but also immense opportunities in planning now for an inclusive and age friendly north, in terms of improving quality of life; giving people more influence over their lives, and 'future-proofing' our businesses and our communities".

To support members in this important agenda, the Northern Housing Consortium is embarking on a major cross-disciplinary and multi-stranded project with a central theme of 'inclusive design'. The ultimate aim of the project will be to build a picture of what an '**Age Friendly Community in the North**' might look like in the year 2020.

Sarah explains, "To inform the project, we are beginning a process of consultation with older people around the north, with our members and their partners. In the coming weeks, we intend to publish future-focussed discussion papers on 'inclusive design' and 'international learning'. These papers will form the development work for the final report which will be published in the Autumn."

If you would like input into the project, or would like to talk to NHC about your vision of an age friendly community and the key challenges your organisation will face, please contact Sarah Taylor at the Northern Housing Consortium.

The Northern Housing Consortium event '**Housing in an Ageing Society**' is being held in York on 12th March and will be one of the first opportunities to hear direct from government on the strategy and the sectors response. Programme and booking information is available at www.northern-consortium.org.uk.

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The Northern Housing Consortium is a non-political, not for profit, member based organisation, whose members between them manage almost 90% of social housing in the North. Our main roles are:
 - To provide a comprehensive range of timely, relevant and affordable services for members with a distinct focus on Northern issues
 - To take a lead role in enabling the improvement of housing and organisational performance in the North
 - To work with Government and other bodies to ensure the region benefits from the resources and funding available to provide safe, vibrant, sustainable communities

Our provision of support is delivered across four themed areas: Quality of Life, Quality of Place, Performance Improvement and Investment & Resources.

Further information can be found on our website at www.northern-consortium.org.uk

2. Communities and Local Government sets UK policy on local government, housing, urban regeneration, planning and fire and rescue. They have responsibility for all race equality and community cohesion related issues in England and for building regulations, fire safety and some housing issues in England and Wales. The rest of their work applies only to England.

3. 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society', published 25th February 2008 is CLG's strategy outlining their plans for making sure that there is enough appropriate housing available in future to relieve the forecasted unsustainable pressures on homes, health and social care services.
