

Our Delivery Plan 2016

A Short Summary



This document is a summary of our **Delivery Plan for 2016/17**. You can read the full version here:

www.northamptonpartnershiphomes.org.uk/sites/default/files/NPH%20Delivery%20Plan%202016.pdf.

Foreword

Welcome to our updated Northampton Partnership Homes Delivery Plan 2016.

Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) is the Arm's Length Management Organisation set up by Northampton Borough Council (NBC) to run the Council's housing services, following extensive consultation with residents and employees. We started our operations on 5 January 2015. The Council gave us a contract for 15 years with options to extend.

NPH is governed by a Board with Council, independent, tenant and employee representatives. We believe that putting residents and employees at the heart of our governing arrangements is delivering positive improvements.

NPH's five year Delivery Plan was approved by the Board of NPH and by the Council's Cabinet in November 2014. This set out our vision, mission and values, our ambitions for our first five years of operation, as well as the challenges we face.

We have now completed our first year of operation and this updated plan gives information about our achievements to date as well as our plans for 2016/17 and the current challenges and opportunities we face.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our residents and stakeholders who have helped make our first year as Northampton Partnership Homes a success. We have established a strong and positive relationship with the Council and other partners and look forward to continuing these relationships in the coming years. We would welcome your comments on this updated Delivery Plan and please continue to let us have your thoughts and views which are highly valued!



David Latham
Chair of the Board,
Northampton Partnership Homes



The challenges we face

Since we were set up in January 2015, there have been a lot of changes to the national housing scene, including:

- A 1% reduction in social housing rents each year from April 2016. NPH's income comes from rents so this means our budget will reduce year on year – the reductions add up to £28m over the next five years.
- Continuing reforms to welfare benefit payments. Universal credit is being rolled out across Northampton and new tenants' housing benefit will be limited to the amount eligible under the Local Housing Allowance rate from April 2018. This will particularly affect single people under 35 years old.
- From April 2017 tenants with a household income of over £30,000 will be required to pay an increased rent to reflect market rents in the area. We are waiting for more details about this.
- The end of secure tenancies for life.
- The sale of high value empty council homes to support the right to buy for Registered Social landlords (Housing Associations).

All these challenges result in changes to our original plans – our reduced income means we will need to work hard to deliver as much as we can and as efficiently as we can so that we can maintain and improve services to customers as much as possible.

Northampton Borough Council (NBC) is writing a Housing Strategy for Northampton that will focus on some key issues for Northampton, including:

- Affordable housing, new housing, regeneration and growth
- The private rented sector
- Helping people to achieve and maintain independence
- Reducing homelessness and meeting housing need

We are helping NBC with the development of this Strategy and will work with them to help deliver key parts of it in future.



Our First Year Achievements

Here are the headlines of what we have achieved in our first year of operation:

- We've delivered £32m of improvements to homes including:
 - Continuing decent homes works to 1,000 homes where work was previously refused.
 - Works to flats including Abbey Street and Eastfield.
 - Comprehensive make-over for Dover Court.
 - Refurbishment of Eleanore House, the sheltered housing scheme, which is due to finish in October 2016.
 - External insulation work to keep homes warmer and installing photovoltaic panels to 1,200 bungalows, to reduce fuel bills.
- We've improved the time we take to turnaround empty homes from 30 days to 22.
- We've started work on improving the way repairs are ordered and scheduled to make us more efficient. This new system will start in June.
- We've improved the way we deal with anti-social behaviour.
- We've developed new Health and Safety policies and improved fire safety in blocks of flats.
- We've reviewed our sheltered housing service and will be implementing recommendations in 2016/17.
- We've produced a handbook for leaseholders to give useful information about their lease and service charges.





- We've launched a "Bring Back Pride" campaign aimed at encouraging all staff to identify issues such as fly tipping and vandalism on estates and get problems sorted.
- We've reviewed how we deal with complaints and a new policy is being launched in 16/17.
- We've launched the NPH website and the quarterly tenants' newsletter *NPH Voice*.
- The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Strategy was formally signed in May 2015 and is being implemented.
- Tenants agreed a Tenant Training and Support Strategy in August 2015. In the first 9 months of the year, we provided 87 courses with over 380 tenants attending.
- We established two youth groups.
- We refurbished five community hubs, one with an IT suite. We also supported the Leicester Street Community Garden project.
- We recruited to our new staff structure, with recruitment to 81 permanent posts being made and the number of Agency workers reduced to 19.
- We reduced staff sickness by nearly half.



Our Plans for 2016/17

We will continue our programme of improvements to homes and estates, spending c £25m on a range of improvements including:

- Improvements to the Eastfield and Kings Heath areas, including new fencing, external wall insulation and improving communal areas of flats.
- Upgrading the communal areas of St Katherine's Court.
- External wall insulation and external works at Abbey Street, Far Cotton and Delapre.
- Completing the demolition of Little Cross Street and start of the new build development.
- Starting a five year programme to replace fencing.
- Redevelopment of Lakeview House.
- We are introducing a new system to make our repairs service more efficient and cost effective.
- We will finish our review of the grounds maintenance service and implement the findings.
- We are reviewing the way we deliver estate services and will introduce improvements.
- We will improve the way that we support vulnerable tenants to help them stay in their homes.
- We will take action to reduce fuel bills, through improving insulation and by working with partners to give advice about energy switching and energy saving.





- We will be preparing for the start of the new “Pay to Stay” policy and the end of lifetime secure tenancies.
- We will work with tenants and leaseholders to expand the options available for people to get involved and will work with tenants to review the TIES document.
- We will look at ways we can increase our income to expand our community development work.
- We will develop an apprenticeship programme to develop the skills we need for the future.
- We will review our services to make sure they are delivering value for money.
- We will explore options to build new homes and bring in extra income.



Measuring our Progress

The Tenants' Panel and the Service Improvement Groups will have regular reports on progress delivering these plans and overall progress will be monitored by NPH's Board, which meets eight times per year.

This document is a summary of our **Delivery Plan for 2016/17**.

You can read the full version here:

www.northamptonpartnershiphomes.org.uk/sites/default/files/NPH%20Delivery%20Plan%202016.pdf.