

Planning Focus

Issue 7 - March 2011

- North Yorkshire Housing Needs Assessment
- Annual Monitoring Report 2009-10
- Status of the Regional Spatial Strategy
- Localism and Decentralisation Bill
- Next steps for Craven

Planning Focus provides information on Craven District Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) - the new 'plan' for the area of Craven outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park - and other planning policy issues.

ASSESSING HOUSING NEED IN NORTH YORKSHIRE - STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT



A major survey is underway to assess the current and future housing need across the whole of North Yorkshire. All the North Yorkshire local authorities, including Craven, are working together as the North Yorkshire Strategic Housing Partnership, and have commissioned consultants GVA Grimley to undertake this research.

To gather information for the survey a questionnaire was sent to every home in rural areas across North Yorkshire, including Bentham, Glusburn, Crosshills and Sutton-in-Craven. Larger settlements with populations greater than 3,000 (Skipton) received a sample survey.

The closing date for completing questionnaires was the 6th March and it is expected that the results will be known by the end of May 2011. The information acquired from the survey will inform the policies within the Local Development Framework, and will help the Council to determine the amount of housing needed in Craven, both market and affordable. For further information please see the [Housing Need](#) webpage.

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

In December 2010 the Council submitted its sixth Annual Monitoring Report to the Secretary of State. The Report contains information on the Council's progress with the Local Development Framework and includes key statistics to measure development and changes in the District over the previous financial year. For 2009-10 the following development took place:

- 82 new dwellings were built, 58 of which were on previously developed, 'brownfield' land. This includes dwellings created through conversions and changes of use.
- 31 'affordable' houses were built and a further 122 were granted planning consent.
- 0.39 hectares of additional employment floorspace was created.
- 340 square metres of additional retail space was brought into use.

Please [click here](#) to download a copy of the Annual Monitoring Report for 2009-2010 from the Council's website.



UPDATE - Status of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Council's Current Housing Targets

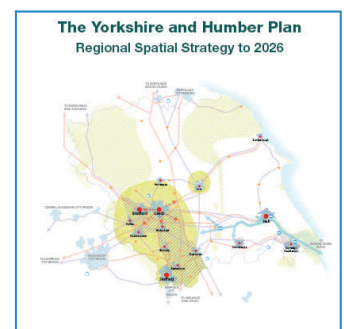
The Regional Spatial Strategy was revoked by the Coalition Government in July 2010, as part of the drive to make planning more localised. This meant that the policies and targets contained within the Regional Spatial Strategy, including the District's housing target of 250 dwellings a year, were no longer applicable.

The Government wanted house building targets to be set by local authorities in close consultation with communities, and in September and October 2010 an interim housing target of 184 dwellings a year was proposed for Craven, based on previous completion rates within the District.

However, the Government's cancellation of the Regional Spatial Strategy was found to be unlawful and was overturned by a legal judgement in November 2010. This means that the Regional Spatial Strategy is back, along with its housing targets and policies on affordable housing, renewable

energy and so on.

So, for now, the housing target for Craven is 250 dwellings a year. The Government still intends to abolish the Regional Spatial Strategy eventually, and Chief Planner Steve Quartermain issued a letter to local planning authorities in November stating that this intention should be taken into consideration when planning applications are being determined. However, because Craven cannot demonstrate that it has enough suitable housing sites to accommodate 250 dwellings a year for the next five years, the Council may not be able to give this letter much weight.



PLANNING AND THE LOCALISM BILL – The Government published its Localism Bill in December 2010. The purpose of the Bill is to devolve power away from central government and give local communities and individuals more responsibility to shape where they live. Some of the implications of the Bill for local planning are outlined below.



The Big Society

The Government wants decisions to be made locally, based on local circumstances and the needs and desires of local communities, rather than imposing targets and decisions in a top-down manner. This vision of empowering local communities, and allowing locally elected representatives, councils, local charities and voluntary groups to do things for themselves is what is meant by David Cameron's term 'Big Society'.

What will this mean for the Planning System?

The Government believes that the current planning system does not give the public enough influence over decisions. The following measures have been proposed to try and make the planning system clearer, more democratic and more effective:

- **Regional Spatial Strategies will be abolished.** The Government intends to abolish regional spatial strategies to remove regionally imposed targets, such as the housing targets, and allow them to be set locally. However, local authorities will still need to take account of issues in neighbouring authorities under the new 'Duty to Cooperate'.
- **Communities will be able to come together to prepare Neighbourhood Plans** setting out

where they would like to see changes in their areas. The Plans can accommodate more development than is proposed in the Local Development Framework, but not less. Plans will be approved by a referendum, then put into force by the local authority.

- **Developers will be required to consult local communities before submitting very large applications** and must take account of the responses.
- **Enforcement rules will be strengthened** to ensure that policies are followed and respected.
- **The Community Infrastructure Levy will give local authorities greater flexibility in deciding how developer contributions are spent** and what level of

contribution is paid, so that local people see the benefit of new developments in the form of improved infrastructure and facilities.

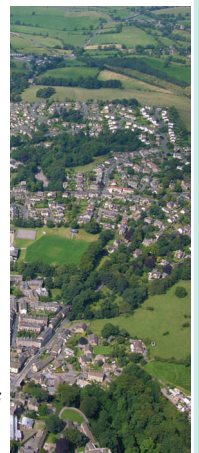
- **The local plan making process will be reformed** to give local authorities greater freedom and restrict interference from central government. Local Development Framework documents will still be examined by the Planning Inspectorate, but the Inspector will only be able to suggest changes to documents if they are invited to do so by the local authority.
- **Duty to cooperate** – neighbouring local authorities will be required to work together constructively when preparing their Local Development Framework's and planning for more strategic issues such as transport infrastructure, flooding or major new developments.

What is happening in Craven?

The Planning Policy team has contacted Town and Parish Councils across the District to discuss the Localism Bill, get a better idea of local issues and priorities, and to see if they have any desires to produce neighbourhood plans. These meetings are on-going, and some parishes have nominated a planning contact, who will feed back changes and development to the rest of the parish council.

A new timetable is currently being drawn up for the progression of the Local Development Framework, starting with a series of community events which will take place over the summer to really get to grips with the needs and desires of local communities and embrace the localism agenda. Following this, the Core Strategy will be revisited, to make sure it contains policies which will help to achieve the vision of the communities, and the Site Allocations DPD will be progressed to find land to accommodate the planned development.

Keep an eye on the [Latest News Page](#) of our website for details of the new timetable and the dates of events in your area.



Planning Focus does not cover the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The National Park Authority (0300 4560030) deals with planning in that area.

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