



## **NewcastleGateshead Programme of Development for Housing Growth SUMMARY**

**October 2008**

Newcastle City and Gateshead Councils, and Bridging NewcastleGateshead (BNG), our housing market renewal partnership, have been successful in achieving New Growth Point (NGP) status. This represents a commitment between local and central government to work together through a Partnership for Growth to promote housing and economic growth and our regeneration ambitions.

This document is NewcastleGateshead's Programme of Development for accelerating housing growth in the core of Tyneside and what is needed to bring development forward.

Our programme is a powerful demonstration of vision, ambition and partnership, which brings shared aspirations for growth in Gateshead and Newcastle expressed in Gateshead Vision 2030 and Newcastle 2021: Taking the City Forward (our Sustainable Communities strategies).

**Context, opportunities and challenges** The BNG housing market renewal partnership are successfully stabilising the housing market in the urban core, demonstrating our ability to deliver and the quality and value of our housing market evidence and intelligence. We need to continue to renew existing stock and accelerate the pace of housing growth within the overall framework of mixed communities. Our future strategy is based both on neighbourhood restructuring and meeting the needs of new growth and investment.

The key opportunities we have are:

- Leadership through a re-energised partnership between both Councils – the Gateshead and Newcastle Partnership – with an overarching remit for driving economic improvement.
- An increasingly confident economic outlook, even in the context of the recent economic downturn, backed by the development of an intelligence-led Economic Masterplan by our City Development Company.
- A long-standing and deepening partnership between the two authorities at both political and delivery/co-ordination agency level, including BNG and our destination marketing agency NewcastleGateshead Initiative.
- A track record of delivering ambitious and high profile public/private investment including innovative new design such as Wayne Hemingway and BoKlok developments and the approach to Scotswood with the UK's first housing EXPO about to agree a commercial delivery partner.
- Public land ownership and assets giving us greater control over the type and quality of development.

The key challenges we face are to:

- Transform the quality of the urban residential environment to boost competitiveness.
- Address structural weaknesses in the housing market.
- Increase supply to address problems of affordability.
- Address increasing travel to work distance, associated congestion and climate change impact.
- Develop a mechanism to achieve more integrated spatial planning both sides of the river.

**The economy, housing and demographics.** The improving performance of the regional economy demonstrates a new economic confidence in the North East. Tyne and Wear is its engine and NewcastleGateshead serve as the urban core of the region, with significant capacity for growth.

Overall, our population is increasing and household projections 2006-2029 are for a 15% increase. We are still losing 25-44 year olds however, the core economic grouping; families we aim to attract.

Our ambitions, shared with the government, are for a growing focus on urban areas in driving local and regional economic prosperity and growth – and research shows that there is an intrinsic link between the economy and good quality housing. We account for 15% of the region's population and a quarter of its jobs, but there are still 100,000 commuters into the region each day, and 27,000 more between the two areas themselves.

The twin focus for housing growth is on quantity, sooner than would otherwise be the case; and on quality, adding value by ensuring quality places, where people will choose to live, and builders will want to build. It is about providing a much better choice of homes for people at different lifestages, on different incomes, for those here already and those who will move here in the future. It combines housing renewal, growth, and the prompt provision of infrastructure.

### **Growth and renewal**

- Our proposals cover the whole of both districts and reinforce the role of the urban core.
- Growth will take place alongside renewal, to create great places to live.
- We will ensure that the early development takes place in Bridging NewcastleGateshead and other key sites, spreading out along the Tyne Gorge and north-south cultural axis over time.
- All supported by an effective 'open for business' attitude across the partnership.

### **Sustainability, design and affordability**

- The urban core is the focus for major new employment initiatives.
- 75-80% of new development on brownfield sites.
- Green corridors and public spaces, improved Keelman's and Hadrian's Way and infrastructure that links new development to the river, work and leisure opportunities.
- The sites for growth are mainly in the urban core and will be developed in line with the principles in the Congestion Reduction Plan, focussing on core public transport corridors and associated improvements, and transport modelling to provide real time assessments to determine the impact on local road networks.
- Development and refurbishment of district centres.
- Ensuring we de-risk sites so developers bring them forward through timely flood risk and water cycle assessments, identifying contamination and considering land remediation works.
- A focus on sustainable design and construction, working to Building for Life Silver/Gold and at least Code for Sustainable Homes level 3, whilst striving for more.
- We will improve peoples' housing options through building more family homes and aim for 25% affordable housing on most sites, with local variations reflecting supply and demand.

### **The scale of housing growth**

- We aim to deliver a total of 17,900 new homes by March 2017, and 14,270 after taking demolitions into account. This is a 23.8% uplift over the draft Regional Spatial Strategy.
- This is more than 1,500 additional homes a year compared to 738 over the last five years.

### **What Growth Fund will be used for 2009/10-2010/11**

Growth Funding will help to accelerate development, particularly of large housing sites with infrastructure challenges, despite significant actual/forecast investment from the public and private sectors. It will help us to get sites 'oven ready' for when the market picks up again:

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessments, Water Cycle Studies, Surface Water Management Plan, Green Infrastructure Strategy, Ecological Impact study
  - Site investigations and potential remediation – East Gateshead, Town Centre, Bensham, Teams
  - Transport – site access, gateway improvements linked to Scotswood EXPO site, Westmorland and Elswick Roads
  - Site infrastructure/Strategic land assembly – East Gateshead, Hadrian's Way, Scotswood
  - Green infrastructure – Riverside Park in Teams and Walker Harbottle Park and pocket parks
  - Ouseburn pumping station and sewerage system capacity increase – design
  - Business Cases for transport infrastructure around strategic site access and sustainable links
  - Metro Green Feasibility study
  - Flood risk management options – Gateshead Quays, Stella, Dunston Riverside, River Team
- We will ensure flexibility within the programme, so we deliver.

**Governance** The Gateshead and Newcastle Partnership will provide the overarching governance and political leadership structure for housing growth; also providing a link with the Tyne and Wear City Region and other New Growth Points and between the Local Area Agreements and City Region Multi-Area Agreement. We are committed to work across the wider city region and expect to agree specific collaboration to ensure design quality and an emphasis on affordability. We will write to the Department in December when we have discussed these proposals.

The BNG partnership will extend its geographical and functional remit to cover strategy formulation, co-ordination and performance management of housing growth as well as renewal. The added value of this approach is:

- It has a track record for delivery – assessed as 'performing strongly' by the Audit Commission.
- It holds a robust evidence base that is easily expanded.
- It has an effective public/private Board and governance structure that ensures positive scrutiny, challenge, support and peer review.
- It supports the intentions of Comprehensive Area Assessment and a focus on place and partnership working.
- A commitment and track record of working with communities.

As with our successful renewal programme, Gateshead Council will be the Accountable Body for growth, with Bridging NewcastleGateshead's Director the key point of contact for the programme.

**And our approach to delivery** recognises that achieving housing growth requires an innovative, flexible approach and, as well as traditional methods, we are developing bespoke vehicles to make the best use of resources available. Newcastle is establishing one of the first Local Housing Companies nationally and Gateshead is in the process of establishing a Special Purpose Vehicle.

**Resources are being deployed to back our ambitious programme** for renewal and growth: integrating local, regional, private and government investment plans. For 2009/10-2010/11:

- We ask for £7.935m Growth Fund; £6.950m capital and £985,000 (12.4%) revenue. This will work alongside £520m matched and £798m complementary funding to really make a difference to the delivery of new homes in the area.
- We have also made expressions of interest for Community Infrastructure Funding to improve access to 'Strategic Sites' and 'Sustainable Links' to provide improved access via the Keelman's and Hadrian's Way between new housing sites and leisure and employment opportunities.

We believe that this level of support is essential to contribute towards our ambitious targets.

Special programmes, a good proportion of mainstream funds and our powers, policies and tariffs, will be effectively used together, to make our new developments great places to live. This will be complemented by support for local people, to make sure that they have the opportunity to benefit from the changes going on in their places as well.

