

Community Led Housing

Background

1. Community Action Northumberland and Northumberland County Council are currently running a campaign promoting the benefits of community led housing.
2. Community-led housing is designed and managed by local people and built to meet the needs of the community – not for private profit. It is a way for local communities to provide their own decent and affordable homes.
3. Community-led housing is often designed to help certain groups – for example young people, older people, or those in need of affordable family homes. It's often eco-friendly and sustainable.
4. Housing can be rented to local people at affordable rates which are kept low over the long-term, or sold to create income for the community.
5. There are lots of different models of community-led housing:
 - cohousing
 - self-help housing
 - cooperative and tenant controlled housing
 - community land trusts
 - projects run by community anchor organisations, like Locality's members.
6. Community-led housing is growing fast – it currently represents about 1% of the UK's housing stock – but the sector is growing.
7. Recent changes in the law have aimed to help support community-led housing. For example the Community Right to Build gives communities the opportunity to gain planning permission without needing to ask the local authority.
8. There are existing examples of community led housing in Northumberland, such as the work of the Glendale Gateway Trust in Wooler, which has included bringing back into use redundant retail units. The Wooler project has been funded by a mix of donations, community bonds, government grant and other resources.
9. Northumberland County Council has been awarded £1.3M by the government to bring forward new community housing schemes.

Issues

1. Members are invited to consider whether to recommend to council that the Town Council actively promote and seek to bring forward community housing schemes in Berwick.