

MORE AFFORDABLE HOMES NEEDED



East Harlsey

A major new survey into the housing needs of Hambleton residents over the next five years has revealed that many more affordable homes are needed - particularly to keep young people in the district.

At least 113 'affordable' properties are assessed to be needed each year up to 2010 – mainly houses, but also flats and bungalows of varying sizes.

Around 50% of those

questioned said the need to buy is important so new homes are needed to both rent and to buy – with some also available on a shared equity basis.

Higher levels of need were revealed in the rural areas – especially around Stokesley and in the town of Northallerton.

The survey last summer saw more than 25,000 homes in rural parishes and market towns surveyed – householders were asked

what their existing needs were and what they would be seeking in the future. Those needs included support requirements such as property adaptations. Parish councils, housing providers and stakeholders were also asked for their views.

The survey's findings form a robust base for the councils' new local plan and housing strategy which are currently under preparation.

NEW DIRECTORY

A new directory with information for older people living in Hambleton is to be published.

Members of the Hambleton Strategic Partnership have been looking at the learning and support needs of older residents – they have undertaken consultation and checked out existing sources of information.

"One of the key issues was not only knowing what was out there but how to access it as many older people do not have a computer," said Paul Fisher of the Hambleton Over Fifties Forum.

"The directory will bring all the good information together in one place in a simple and easy to use format – and acts as a signpost to more detailed information."

He said it will contain information on learning, leisure opportunities such as exercise classes and support services that can help people to access these opportunities.

To obtain a copy call Age Concern on 01609 783066.

SUMMER FARMING FESTIVAL

Northallerton town centre could be the venue for a festival to celebrate farming this summer.

Newly appointed town manager, Geraint Williams, hopes the market place will be alive with activity at the July event – animals, displays, food, bands and a funfair to name but a few.

Local farmers market members will be asked to attend along with local food producers, businesses and shopkeepers.

The festival is just one of the many ideas Geraint has in store for the town – he also wants to launch a new town logo and a business forum will be established at a town management conference this month (February).

Geraint's new role comes about as a result of the Community Planning work led by the Northallerton and Villages Community Plan Forum and supported by Hambleton District Council. It identified the need for a town manager to support business activity, create interaction with the community and maximise the attractiveness of Northallerton to local people and visitors.

HELP..... COMMUNITY PROJECTS NEEDED!



A community group is desperately in need of more ideas for community projects.

It wants to ensure it accesses European funds available to make them happen.

The Hillside Local Development Employment Pact (LDEP) Steering Group is working on developing projects to make the area a better place to live and work. The group – made up of local people from the Hillside ward – brings together the parishes of Borrowby, Knayton, Kirby Knowle, Boltby, Cowesby, Felixkirk, Upsall and Thirlby.

Its delegated grant scheme closes in December this year. It offers up to 50% of project costs – up to a maximum of £10,000 – but the total cost for the scheme must not exceed £25,000, must not be exclusively leisure or health focused or be solely for the over 65s or under 16s.

Projects will need to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area, leading to the creation of jobs or improving people's ability to gain employment. A community shop, out of school child care scheme, rural activities project, computer suite, Thirlby Village Hall and the 'Forest for Thirsk' environmental project have already received funding support.

But if the money – from the European 'Objective 2 Priority 3 Programme' – is not spent by December 2005 it will be forfeited.

For more information contact Ann Johnson on ann-j@hnsn.fslife.co.uk

DRIVING HOME COMMUNITY PLANS

A new Development Officer has been appointed to drive forward Community Plans across Hambleton.

The Hambleton Strategic Partnership has joined forces with the Northallerton and District VSA (Voluntary Services Association) to employ the officer.

Nicky Smith will support the activities of voluntary and community groups across the district, and the development of projects identified through the Community Planning process – which is working to improve the quality of life of the people who live and work in Hambleton.

She is already looking at a community shop, youth venue, new scout hut and a trim trail as a result of the community plans.

She will also be able to offer advice on funding to voluntary and community groups. A funding helpline and drop in surgery is open every Tuesday from 1-5pm at her Northallerton base.

The post has attracted funding from Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales, Hambleton District Council, North Yorkshire County Council, Hambleton & Richmondshire Primary Care Trust and Selby & York Primary Care Trust.

Nicky works three days a week from the Northallerton and District VSA offices in South Parade and can be contacted on (01609) 774633.

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION

Climate change, and how we can address it, is the focus of a new action plan for the district.

Members of the Hambleton Strategic Partnership believe that local people must work together – councils, businesses, public sector organisations, community associations and householders – to try to raise awareness of the global problem.

Climate Change has been a common feature of news reports over the past few months – changing weather patterns and adverse weather events have been linked to greenhouse gases produced by everyday life.

Nationally the government has promised to place the issue on the international agenda at the G8 summit next year. Regionally a draft action plan for Yorkshire and the Humber has been produced.

Now in Hambleton a local climate change action plan is to be drafted to look at how we can make a difference through the efficient use of energy and resources, renewable energy opportunities and cutting carbon emissions.

To get involved in the plan call Hilary Clough-Smith on 01609 767160

PLANS FOR YOUTH CENTRE TAKE SHAPE

A project to create a youth centre for Northallerton is gathering supporters.

The Base Project – a jointly funded scheme with Connexions and Community Education North Yorkshire – has brought a group of young people together over the last year to compile a feasibility study for a youth centre in the town.

It was set up as a result of a consultation exercise two years ago which asked over 800 young people in the Northallerton area what they wanted. The majority cited a youth centre as a priority.

They have visited other youth centres across the country, looked at funding, partnership opportunities and possible locations.

Now a steering group has been set up to take the project forward – but to succeed it needs input and practical commitment from the wider community.

If you would like further information on the project or a copy of the feasibility study call Emma Casson, Youth Worker and Project Co-ordinator on 01609 773340 ext 272.