

Regenerated council houses to be officially unveiled in Sleaford



One of the new homes on Newfield Road, Sleaford. EMN-190618-160401001

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Old and new homes on Newfield Road during the initial phases of work. EMN-190618-174231001

Almost 100 years since the houses in Sleaford's Newfield Road were built under the passing of the 'Addison Act' which began the building of council houses as 'Homes fit for Heroes' in 1919, the council says this latest scheme underlines its commitment to improving and increasing affordable housing in the local area.

Alongside the 63 homes totally refurbished, 18 new ones were built on site, bringing the total number of council houses built in the last decade to 218.

Dating back to 1928, the terraces were previously considered for demolition but the council determined in 2013 that instead it would invest heavily in making them fit for modern living by extending, insulating, reconfiguring and re-modelling them.

Throughout, tenants themselves guided the plans and said they would prefer smaller gardens which opened up space for 18 additional new homes.



Newly built homes on Newfield Road. EMN-190618-174256001

From 69, there are now 81 houses as six were demolished to open up space for the new ones and create a park area and one privately-owned house was outside of the scope of the work.

When fully-occupied, the changes will impact on more than 300 people's daily lives.

Council Leader Coun Richard Wright, who will officially mark the scheme's completion, said: "This project has been nothing short of transformational, and the enormous achievement we have made here, in partnership over six years from early consultation to completion, is a credit to all involved.

"Throughout this near-£9m capital investment – the council's largest ever – the focus has been on regeneration rather than a straight-forward bricks and mortar re-development and that hope and aspiration has really borne fruit as we can see a regenerated community in every sense.



Some of the refurbished homes on Newfield Road. EMN-190618-174220001

"Not only have we created economic-to-run, spacious and high-quality lifetime homes for residents and their families, but, in doing so we have built something that, from the outset, has been truly collaborative with the people whose lives it seeks to improve.

"Here at Newfield, we not only have some of our older housing regenerated for a further 90-years of family life, but also a strong and rejuvenated welcoming neighbourhood where people are proud to live and I welcome new and established residents to these wonderful homes."

A number of different plans have been drawn up for Newfield Road over many years, to deal with known problems of damp, poor thermal performance, parking issues, under-used large gardens, shared access and a lack of community space.

For a number of reasons projects stalled but after much consideration and careful financial planning the Council opted to regenerate the street and refurbish the properties.

Through four rounds of consultation a plan emerged that won enthusiastic support and included:

- Doubling the floor area
- Reconfiguration of rooms

- Turning three-bed homes into two-beds
- Re-orientating rooms to make the most of the light and heat of solar gain
- Reducing garden size
- Building a rear extension to include a bigger kitchen and dining/ study area
- Installing a down-stairs toilet/ shower room
- Off-street parking space
- Insulating, cladding and external decoration to give a contemporary feel and additional warmth... bringing them up to modern building regulation standards

Demolition began in January 2016 and over four phases people were moved out and back in. Along the way displaced and static communities kept in touch through events and fun days and four people found work through the project; three as apprentices on site.

Louise and Paul were among the first tenants to move back into the street. They said: “We’re all so pleased with the improvements. I would never have believed they could have got it as good as they have. It’s like a brand new house.”

Hannah and her daughter, Jessica, aged six, returned after the second phase of works had been completed. Hannah said: “I love it. It’s so much bigger. Jessica loves it too, especially her room and the garden.”

Contractors D Brown & Co were rated exceptional for their community respect and excellent for ensuring everyone’s safety and they achieved a 100 per cent recycling rate for waste building materials.

D Browns Director Kurt Mason, said: “It’s been a real team effort from all points of view on what is a really sensitive site with so many people still living here and returning. The tenants’ response makes you feel that all the hard work has been worthwhile.”

Additionally there are 18 new-build homes across one, two and three beds to respond to need, all built to the NK Fabric First Standard which exceeds building regulations and makes them cheaper to run with heat recovery ventilation, triple glazing thermal performance and air tightness. Government housing agency Homes England awarded £449,500 towards these.