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Region remains in grip of housing crisis

Two thirds of areas lagging behind with building rates

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YORKSHIRE REMAINS in the grips of a housing crisis, with two thirds of council areas failing to get home building rates back to pre-recession rates a decade after the global financial crash.

Major new analysis of official Government housing data has also revealed huge discrepancies in housing supply between individual cities and rural districts in the county, and between the numbers of new homes councils and Ministers believe each area needs.

It has led to claims that “messy” planning policies and a “fetishisation” of the green belt are hampering the pace of building and thereby slowing the economic growth potential of the region as a whole.

Across the country, detailed analysis of regional variations in house building by the BBC's Shared Data Unit revealed that a decade after the global economic downturn, less than one in five areas of England are building enough homes every year at a pace to meet the Government's medium to long-term housing need estimates, and the majority of areas have still not got back to supplying new homes at the same rates they were before the global economic crash of 2008.

The Government today re-affirmed its pledge to enable the building of 300,000 homes a year in England by the mid 2020s.

But campaigners claimed the numbers needed have been underestimated, and called on Ministers to deal with the “national emergency” by putting affordability at the centre of policy.

Shadow Housing Minister and Wentworth and Dearne MP John Healey said: “The housing crisis is getting worse. Over the last eight years, we have seen home ownership levels fall. We have seen homelessness and rents rise. We have seen the level of house building still not back at its pre-global financial crisis peak, and for many people, the housing crisis is a housing costs crisis, a crisis of housing affordability.

“And whilst there are failures

Not meeting the demand

■ **Richmondshire in North Yorkshire has the highest percentage of new homes built compared to government estimate of need, and Scarborough the third. The remainder of the top 10 is also made up of northern councils.**

■ **York had the lowest percentage build rate in Yorkshire compared to its Government assessment of need.**

■ **Across Yorkshire, the research showed that although twelve of 21 council areas in Yorkshire are building above their individual Government assessments, the county as a whole is still not building enough homes every year on average to meet long term demand.**

at a local level, the main responsibility must lie with Government. When you have government weakening the powers of councils to drive a better bargain with big house builders for people in their area, when you get a Government chopping and changing the planning rules as they have done in five separate acts of Parliament in the last eight years, you get a system which is failing.”

The BBC findings were published as the Government also faced renewed calls to abolish stamp duty for pensioners moving house in a move that would free up much-needed family homes for younger buyers. Yorkshire peer Lord Best called on chancellor Philip Hammond to follow-up his announcement in last year's Autumn Budget that first-time buyers would pay no stamp duty on homes costing less than £300,000 with a similar move for over-65s.

Last year, research by the National Housing Federation found that average house prices in Yorkshire are now more than seven times average salaries.

Special Report: Page 6; Comment: Page 10



GUNNING FOR GLORY

James Wotherspoon joins a shooting party on Forneth moor near Dunkeld, Perthshire, as the grouse shooting season got underway – a day later than usual. The Glorious Twelfth became the Thirteenth because shooting on a Sunday is prohibited.

PICTURE: JANE BARLOW

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Calls for rail fares in North to be frozen

THE GOVERNMENT was today facing calls for rail fares to be frozen for passengers in the North after a summer of disruption and delays across the network.

Dewsbury MP Paula Sherriff joined the metro mayors of Greater Manchester and the Liverpool City Region in writing to Transport Secretary Chris Grayling

ahead of the announcement of the annual fare increase tomorrow.

The exact rise will be confirmed when the July Retail Prices Index (RPI) measure of inflation is released by the Office for National Statistics, but economists predict the figure will be announced as 3.5 per cent. The

Department for Transport (DfT) uses July's RPI to determine the annual increase in regulated train fares, which comes into force every January.

Regulated fares include season tickets on most commuter routes, some off-peak return tickets on long distance journeys and Anytime tickets around major

cities. These fares went up by 3.6 per cent this year.

Large parts of the North saw rail services plunged into chaos following the botched introduction of a new timetable by operator Northern in May.

Disruption has continued in recent weeks and this weekend Northern cancelled 80 services,

including trains on the Liverpool to Manchester Airport line in the third successive week of Sunday cancellations. In an open letter to Mr Grayling, Labour MP Ms Sherriff said: “To again increase fares faster than wages for passengers in the North would only add insult to injury.

Continued on Page 2.

Briefing

Campaign to fight scams on pensions

FINANCE: The Financial Conduct Authority and The Pensions Regulator have joined forces in launching a new campaign to tackle pension scams as alarming figures show that victims of fraud lost an average of £91,000 each in 2017.

Full story: Page 2.

Heartbreak over drug decision

HEALTH: A charity has condemned a decision by health officials to reject a drug to treat a rare genetic disorder which can mean that affected children do not live to their second birthday.

Full story: Page 4.

Road casualties in significant rise

CRIME: The number of people killed or badly injured on South Yorkshire's roads has risen significantly, as police officers admit motorists are continuing to drive while using phones or under the influence of drugs.

Full story: Page 14.

Prayers for seriously ill ‘Queen of Soul’ Aretha Franklin, 76, in hospital

TRIBUTES WERE paid last night after it was revealed that singer Aretha Franklin was seriously ill.

The music star, known as the Queen of Soul, was first reported to be “gravely ill” by American film critic and entertainment reporter Roger Friedman, who said he is a close friend of Franklin.

Friedman said Franklin was in Detroit with friends and family, who were “asking for prayers and privacy”. Another source said Franklin, 76, was “seriously ill”.

Detroit TV station WDIV Local 4 also reported Franklin's family said she was ill.

The channel's news anchor Evrod Cassimly tweeted: “I am so saddened to report that the Queen of Soul and my good friend, Aretha Franklin is gravely ill.

“I spoke with her family members this morning. She is asking for your prayers at this time. I'll have more details as I'm allowed to release.”

Franklin revealed she was going to retire after releasing one more album in February last year.



ARETHA FRANKLIN: Family has asked for prayers and privacy for seriously ill soul singer.

The singer was forced to cancel a handful of concerts earlier this year, including a stint at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival in April, due to ill health.

Franklin – and her distinctive, powerful voice – rose to fame in the 1960s after starting out as a gospel singer, going on to achieve massive global success with memorable soul hits including *Respect*, *Think* and *You Make Me Feel Like A Natural Woman*.

Call for probe into business banking system

A YORKSHIRE MP is calling for a public inquiry into the “often incestuous” relationships between financial institutions and advisers.

Kevin Hollinrake, who is the co-chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Fair Business Banking, believes a public inquiry is the only way to restore faith in the business banking system, which has been left reeling from allegations of misconduct

In a letter to Andrew Bailey, the chief executive of the Financial Conduct Authority, Mr Hollinrake, who is the MP for Thirsk, Malton & Filey, said: “Our entire economic model depends on fairness, transparency, accountability and justice not only being done, but being seen to be done.

“As things stand this not the case.” Although there had been several investigations into scandals

and organisations, Mr Hollinrake said there had been as yet “no full-scale public inquiry into what, from our experience, is often savage treatment of businesses”.

Mr Hollinrake said he believed the inquiry must cut across institutional lines and investigate the complex and “often incestuous” relationships between financial institutions, their numerous advisers and related professions.

Mr Hollinrake wants the in-

quiry to analyse the regulatory system that is supposed to uphold standards and protect consumers.

He believes all the thresholds for holding an inquiry have been met.

A Financial Conduct Authority spokesperson said: “We have received the letter and will respond.”

Full story: Business Page 1; Comment: Page 10.

TODAY'S WEATHER

Dry but with plenty of cloud around.

Full forecast: Back Page

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